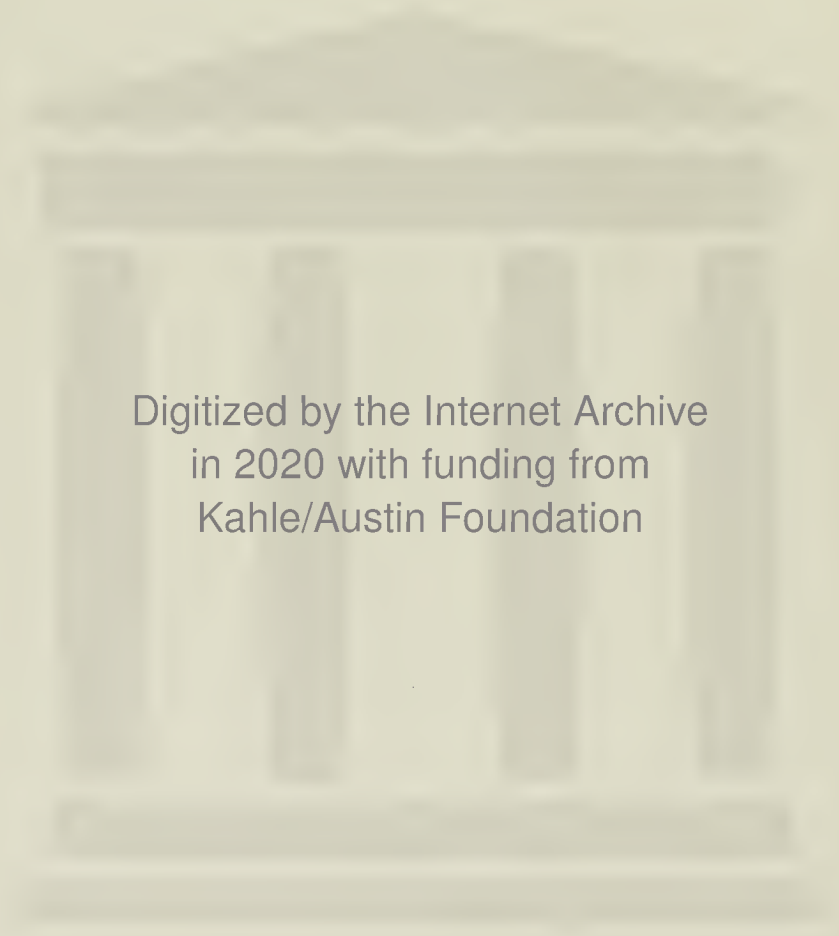

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THE PRINT COLLECTOR

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Rembrandt van Ryn
Portrait of Rembrandt leaning on a stone sill
Etching

765
C57

THE PRINT COLLECTOR

BY
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To

MARTIN HARDIE, R.E., R.I.,

WITHOUT WHOSE ENCOURAGEMENT AND ASSISTANCE THIS BOOK WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN WRITTEN

INTRODUCTION

THIS book, from its first chapter to its bibliography, is not written for the advanced student, but for the amateur collector, who wishes to find out more about the wide prospect before him, and would like to know what hills to climb, what marshes to avoid, and what short cuts there may be. For that reason a very large subject has been dealt with from a most comprehensive aspect. Each branch of it, including lithography, so often omitted in this kind of handbook, has been traced from its beginnings down to modern times, and the work of its best exponents has been discussed. Descriptions have been given of the technique employed, because no one can take an intelligent interest in prints unless he can distinguish, say, an aquatint from a mezzotint, or a soft-ground etching from a lithograph. Some by-ways, such as those of engraved ornament or glass colour-prints, have been pursued, mainly because this kind of handbook has ignored them hitherto.

Though the prices of prints, and particularly of the prints by older masters such as Dürer and

Schongauer and Rembrandt are rising by leaps and bounds, there are still endless fields among prints of the past which the collector of moderate means can explore. Some of these have been indicated, and the man who has learned to back his own judgment can well support modern art, where he has an infinite choice, and can seek out the "men of to-morrow." He cannot, however, obtain ripe judgment and prophetic vision unless he has followed and absorbed the great traditions of the past. Though he may specialise in one department, he must have some substantial knowledge of the subject as a whole, and must cast an intelligent and analytic eye over a wide area before he pegs out his own small claim. This book may help, by its illustrations as well as its text, to set him on the right path towards the long trail of adventure. And in his quest the collector of prints has a great advantage over the collector of paintings and the larger works of art. He is more likely to make up on the swings what he loses on the roundabouts; and also he can put his whole picture gallery, neatly and compactly, into the narrow space of one or two boxes and portfolios. How to encompass that neatness and compactness, and how to know and cure the ailments to which prints are subject is dealt with in the last chapter of this book.

CONTENTS

CHAP.		PAGE
I.	Wood-engraving to 1830	17
II.	Early Line-engraving	36
III.	Line-engraving to 1850	64
IV.	Etching to 1850	91
V.	Mezzotint Engraving	119
VI.	Stipple Engraving	143
VII.	Aquatint Engraving	151
VIII.	Colour Prints	165
IX.	Lithography	191
X.	Modern Etching	211
XI.	Wood-engraving and Line-engraving. The Modern Revival	241
XII.	Hints for the Collector	257
	Books of Reference	271

ILLUSTRATIONS

Unless otherwise stated, the illustrations are from prints in the Victoria and Albert Museum.

		FACING PAGE
REMBRANDT	REMBRANDT LEANING ON A STONE SILL . *Frontispiece*	
ANONYMOUS	ILLUSTRATION TO POLIPHILI HYPNEROTOMACHIA, VENICE (ALDUS MANUTIUS), 1499	20
DÜRER	THE VIRGIN SEATED ON A CRESCENT	24
THOMAS BEWICK	VIGNETTES	30
EDWARD CALVERT	THE CYDER FEAST.	32
DÜRER	THE NATIVITY	48
H. S. BEHAM	YOUNG WOMAN AND DEATH . *From a Print in the British Museum*	56
J. BINCK	SO-CALLED SELF-PORTRAIT . *From a Print in the British Museum*	56
H. S. BEHAM	PANEL OF ORNAMENT	58
H. ALDEGREVER	PANEL OF ORNAMENT	58
LUCES VAN LEYDEN	THE COWHERD AND THE MILKMAID . *From a Print in the British Museum*	60
WM. FAITHORNE	SIR WILLIAM SANDERSON	68
R. NANTEUIL	MICHEL LE TELLIER	68
SIR R. STRANGE	CHARLES I	74
R. DE LAUNAY	LES ADIEUX	82

		FACING PAGE
N. Ponce	La Toilette	86
Rembrandt	Christ Preaching	94
Rembrandt	Three Cottages	98
Van Dyck	Jan Snellinx *From a Print in the British Museum*	102
A. van Ostade	Anglers on a Bridge *From a Print in the British Museum*	108
Canaletto	The Portico with the Lantern	112
J. S. Cotman	Caernarvon Castle	116
W. Vaillant	Memento Mori	122
J. McArdell	Mrs. Baufoy	126
V. Green	Jane, Countess of Harrington	128
J. R. Smith	The Promenade at Carlisle House	130
J. M. W. Turner	The Junction of the Severn and the Wye	134
D. Lucas	Salisbury Cathedral	138
Sir Frank Short	The Lifting Cloud	140
F. Bartolozzi	Miss Farren	144
F. Wheatley	Strawberrys, Scarlet Strawberrys	146
W. Ward	Alinda	148
F. Jukes	Matrimony	154
E. Delacroix	Le Forgeron	160
Sir Frank Short	The New Moon	162
Fantuzzi	Man Seated in a Wood	168
E. Isabey	Marée Basse	194
H. Daumier	Mœurs Conjugales *From a Print in the British Museum*	198

		FACING PAGE
J. Copley	Jesus and a Woman of the City *From a Print published by P. & D. Colnaghi & Co.*	204
C. Meryon	La Galerie Notre Dame	214
Samuel Palmer	The Early Ploughman	218
J. A. McN. Whistler	Balcony, Amsterdam	220
Sir F. Seymour Haden	Kilgaren Castle	224
Sir D. Y. Cameron	Urquhart Castle *From a Print published by J. Connell & Sons*	228
James McBey	Gale at Port Erroll *From a Print in the possession of Mr. Martin Hardie*	230
F. L. Griggs	Ex Anglia Perdita *From a Print published by P. and D. Colnaghi & Co.*	234
Auguste Lepère	Belle Matinée d'Automne	238
Mrs. Raverat	The Duckpond	248
Eric Gill	Autumn Midnight	250
John Nash	Bathers	250
R. S. Austin	Before Mass	252
J. G. Laboureur	Le Chasseur	254

THE PRINT COLLECTOR

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CHAPTER I

WOOD-ENGRAVING TO 1830

WOOD-ENGRAVING, like so many other arts, appears to have been known in China many centuries before its possibilities first dawned on Western Europe. One reason for this, and perhaps the most potent, was the earlier invention of paper in the East. Vellum is unsuited for the purpose of taking prints of woodcuts, and, moreover, it was expensive, and although a couple of early woodcuts are extant printed on this material, they are to be regarded as *tours de force*, and the general practice of engraving had to wait for the invention of paper in the fourteenth century. But engraving on wood-blocks had been known for some centuries already, in its capacity for reproducing decorative designs on fabrics. This, too, had an Eastern origin; the printed cloths of India were known to the Phœnicians, and we have many Coptic printed textiles of the fifth and sixth centuries. In Western Europe the practice was general by the twelfth century,

and James I of Spain in 1234 authorised a law forbidding the wearing of "*estampados*," or printed cloths. The printed pattern was sometimes used as a ground for embroidery, and often figures were introduced among the decorative designs.

Obviously the transition was simple from printing on cloth to printing on paper, once that commodity was cheap and plentiful. Perhaps the first experiments were made with reproductions of decorative designs, but the development of prints as we know them was accelerated by two of the social customs of the Middle Ages: card-playing and the habit of going on pilgrimages. Cards were said to have been invented to amuse the mad King Charles VI of France, and the royal account books for 1392 show an entry of payment made for three packs of cards in gold and colours. By the end of the fourteenth century gambling was so general over most of Europe that in many places the use of cards was prohibited; at Lille in 1382, at Ulm in 1397, at Augsburg in 1400, among other towns. The earliest cards were probably painted, and the date of the first printed ones is not known, but that it must have been comparatively early is shown by the fact that in 1441 the Venetian woodcutters appealed for the restriction of the import from Germany of *carte e figure stampide* (cards and printed pictures) which was ruining their own trade. The earliest

woodcut playing cards extant seem to be not earlier than about 1460.

Religious woodcuts, however, made for the purpose of distribution to pilgrims, have been preserved from a much earlier date. Pilgrimages were immensely popular for all manner of reasons, among which their spiritual efficacy did not perhaps hold the first place. Sometimes they were imposed as penances; sometimes the desire of the sinner to obtain a really good indulgence led him far afield in the hope that distance might be accounted additional merit, but very often the mere joyous spirit of adventure sent the traveller forth in the Spring. Whatever the object of his journey, at many of the monasteries where he begged a night's lodging, as well as at the holy shrine which was the object of his search, the pilgrim would pay his small coin for a holy picture of his favourite saint. This would be a crude outline woodcut, brightly coloured in glaring tones, which he would carry carefully home and pin up on the wall of his bedroom, or, luckily for posterity, would use as decoration for a book-cover or a coffer-lid. These little pictures were called "Heilgen", or in the Swabian dialect "Helgen", and early in the fifteenth century they seem to have been a monopoly of the monasteries, and no doubt a source of steady income. Luther, in "An den Christlichen Adel", complains that the Pope allows the convents to remain empty, and

only puts in a monk to say mass and to sell pictures.

In the second half of the fourteenth century a change took place through the rise of a class of professional wood-engravers, usually known as "Briefmaler". These were probably petty publishers, each with his own little press, from which he would issue broadsides and cheap pictures of all types. A great many of these rude prints are preserved in public collections. Often the religious cuts would be pasted in as illustrations to a manuscript book, and the next step was the production of written books with printed illustrations, the cuts being printed on the pages of the book instead of being pasted in. This was the stage which had been reached when printing with movable type became general about 1450.[1] This at once changed the conditions. Obviously the days of the written book were numbered, but the "Briefmaler" did not mean to give in without a fight, and competed by issuing books of his own in which the text as well as the illustrations was cut on wood. These are the well-known Blockbooks. None of those existing can be dated much before 1460, and the most famous group, of which the finest editions came from the Netherlands, must be dated about 1460–65. Among these are the "Biblia Pauperum," the "Canticum Canticorum", the "Ars Moriendi" and the

[1] *See* Campbell Dodgson: "Catalogue of Early German and Flemish Woodcuts in the British Museum," p. 15.

ANONYMOUS

Illustration to "Poliphili Hypnerotomachia," Venice (Aldus Manutius), 1499

Woodcut

"Speculum Humanae Salvationis." The best known is perhaps the "Biblia Pauperum," a sort of handbook for the poorer priests, containing forty or fifty pages with cuts of biblical subjects and a couple of verses of Scripture, all very useful in the compilation of a sermon. The "Ars Moriendi" illustrates the battle between angels and demons at the bedsides of the dying, and the British Museum copy has twenty-four pages, with eleven strongly designed cuts. That these fine editions came from the Netherlands is shown by the treatment of drapery, with straight lines and hooked folds. Other Blockbooks are the "Grotesque Alphabet," of 1464, the "Sibyls and Prophets," at St. Gallen, and the "St. George," in the British Museum. All these books were extremely popular, and were issued over and over again, but in the later editions most of their merits have disappeared. The other books published both in Germany and in the Netherlands were much inferior to this group.

The question of the early illustrated books, as distinct from the Blockbooks, hardly comes within the scope of this work, since they are the prizes of the bibliophile rather than of the print-collector. But recent catalogues of Swiss print-sellers show that the illustrations sometimes come on the market in the shape of single sheets torn out of their context, and costing only a couple of pounds, and therefore a few words on the subject may not be out of place. Germany still

takes the lead, and the pioneer among the printers is Albrecht Pfister, of Bamberg, whose first illustrated books appeared about 1460–62, one of them being the "Biblia Pauperum." From 1470 onwards a stream of books with woodcut illustrations flowed from the German presses, until, about 1600, engravings or etchings usurped their popularity. Augsburg is one of the most important centres, and the printer, Günther Zainer, the chief figure. Ulm came next and not far behind, and then came Basle, Nuremberg, Cologne and Strassburg. Mentz is famous for the most wonderful book of the fifteenth century, Breydenbach's "Travels to the Holy Land," printed and illustrated in 1486 by Erhard Reuwich, and Lübeck for a very fine Low-German Bible, printed by Stephan Arndes in 1494. The Netherlands are less important, though fairly good work was printed by Gerard Leeu at Gouda and Antwerp, and Snellaert at Delft. Italian and French book illustrations of an early date are not likely to come singly in the way of the average collector, but the French Books of Hours have a charm all their own. A point to be noted with regard to all these books is the constant repetition of the cycle of illustrations established by the first edition. Popular works were edited over and over again, but were illustrated either by the same cuts or by copies of them. And the same cut might recur two or three times in one book, with a different title on

each appearance. As a rule these illustrations were coloured by hand.

A separate development among fifteenth century prints is the group known as the "Dotted Prints" (in German *Schrotblätter;* in French *la manière criblée*). At this point a word on technique may be advisable. Early wood-engraving was done on the plank, that is, on wood, usually pear or apple wood, cut in the direction of the grain. The knife was the only tool employed, and to speak of wood-*engraving* in connection with these prints is strictly incorrect. They are wood-*cuts*. The design was drawn on the wood, probably in pen-and-ink; the knife then cut away all the un-inked wood, leaving the lines standing out as narrow ridges. The block was then inked and the paper laid on it and rubbed from the back, making a pattern of black lines on a white ground. The "dotted prints" were done on metal, and the pattern is composed of white on black. The graver was used to make the drawing, giving a white line in the printing, and the difficulty of clearing away large tracts of metal background was overcome by punching it out in dots. Punches were often used in the shape of stars and quatrefoils, producing a rich decorative effect on cloaks or backgrounds. This style seems to belong to the second half of the fifteenth century. A very good example is "St. Christopher on Horseback" in the British Museum.

The turn of the fifteenth century marks a fundamental change in the conditions of wood-engraving, for now, instead of being a craft practised by monastic artisans and printsellers, it becomes the pre-occupation of the painters, who found in it a means of circulating their work at a price which made it accessible to the bulk of the population. From 1500 onwards most woodcuts are signed with well-known names. But the artist seldom, if ever, actually cut his own blocks; he would draw the design on the wood and hand it over for engraving to the professional woodcutters, whose craft soon reached a very high standard of technical excellence. Sometimes the signature of the engraver appears on the block beside that of the artist, though the practice did not become usual till after 1550. The principal names among the artists of the first half of the fifteenth century who designed woodcuts are Dürer at Nuremberg, Burgkmair at Augsburg, Holbein at Basle, Altdorfer at Ratisbon, Lucas Cranach at Wittenberg, and Lucas van Leyden in the Netherlands. Of these Dürer is far and away the greatest.

Albrecht Dürer was born at Nuremberg in 1471, and was apprenticed to his father, a goldsmith. Then, desirous of studying painting, he entered the studio of Michael Wohlgemuth, and, after four years of travelling, returned to Nuremberg in 1494, where he remained until his death in 1528. His work as an engraver and etcher

Albrecht Dürer

The Virgin seated on a Crescent

Woodcut

will be mentioned in later chapters. His earliest authenticated woodcut is an illustration to the Epistles of St. Jerome, published at Basle in 1492. The great series of woodcuts begins, in 1498, with the fifteen subjects of the "Apocalypse," now very rare in their original impressions. They are rather extravagant and unduly fantastic, but the well-known "Four Riders" and the less known, but equally fine, "St. Michael defeating the Rebel Angels," rank among his best work. In 1511 the second large set appeared, the "Life of the Virgin," with nineteen cuts drawn in a restrained and beautiful manner. About the same date were published the eleven large cuts known as the "Great Passion," many of which had been executed some years earlier, and, also in 1511, the thirty-six cuts of the "Little Passion." These inevitably repeat to some extent the designs of the previous series, but "Christ Appearing to Mary Magdalene" and "The Supper at Emmaus" are original and striking. To the year 1511 also belong, in addition to other cuts, "The Holy Trinity," a not very exciting composition but a marvellous example of the woodcutter's skill; the charming "Adoration of the Magi"; the "Mass of St. Gregory"; and the beautiful square "St. Christopher." This year marks the finest period of the woodcuts. In the following years Dürer was much occupied with the very dull cuts commissioned by the Emperor Maximilian I for the glory of the House

of Hapsburg. An immense series of illustrated works was projected, and six or seven actually finished. The artists chiefly employed were Burgkmair and Schaufelein, but Dürer made the designs for the Triumphal Arch and the Triumphal Car. He evidently did not find the subjects very inspiring, and the numerous allegorical motives make the whole almost unintelligible. In his later years he did not produce many woodcuts, but among them are two very fine portraits, the first portraits worthily expressed in this medium, the "Emperor Maximilian," of 1518, and the "Ulrich Varnbüler," of 1522.

By the year 1511 Dürer had attained the full mastery of his technique, and his woodcuts of that date, no less than his engravings, show the harmony and balance of his composition, and his grasp of the economical use of significant line. Despite his two journeys to Venice, and all that he must have learnt from Italian art, his work is essentially German, and is indeed still rather hampered by Gothic tradition. But although this may have limited his search for an ideal beauty, to which German art had not yet attained, we owe to it the charming glimpses of landscape backgrounds with turreted towns set among hills and little fir trees, which form so often the most fascinating part of a Holy Family or a Nativity.

The average collector probably does not aspire to own a Dürer, but as a matter of fact there are

a great many in existence. The very fine impressions cost many hundreds of pounds, but the less good prints of the woodcuts can sometimes be picked up for a quite moderate amount. And when it is a question of such a master, the second-rate must rank above the best by lesser hands.

Lucas Cranach, of Wittenberg, who was Court Painter to the Elector of Saxony, was never so successful with his woodcuts as with his pictures. He seems to have been worried by the limitations of the medium, with its demand for strong pattern and clear line. Albrecht Altdorfer, of Ratisbon, has a much more attractive manner, and has an imaginative perception of the beauty of landscape which gives an extraordinary charm to his little towns and his forests of dripping larch-trees. Lucas van Leyden, in the Netherlands, is important historically, but as a wood-engraver intrinsically rather dull.

The other great master of the sixteenth century is Holbein, whose "Dance of Death" is perhaps the best-known woodcut series in existence. The idea was not original, for Holbein used the types established by an already well-worn tradition. The morbid horror of death, which sought relief from its terrors by mocking at them, obsesses the literature and art of the later Middle Ages. It was the time of the great plagues, when death stood near to every man, and the artist, drawing in shrinking hardihood his designs of playful

skeletons, whispers *Timor mortis conturbat me* and glances over his shoulder. All over Europe there were paintings of the Dance, and in England there were frescoes at St. Paul's and the Tower. Then in 1485 the Paris printer, Guyot Marchant, issued a woodcut edition of the Dance, which had an enormous vogue, and his example was copied by Anthoine Vérard, with an equally popular version. But Holbein's is the "Dance of Death" *par excellence*. It was published at Lyons in 1538, and was composed of forty-one cuts, each about 2 by 2½ inches. The wood-cutter was Hans Lützelburger. Holbein keeps to the traditional scheme of the King, the Duchess, the Abbot, the Peasant and so on, greeting the grim reminder of what they must become, but his Death has a crude sense of humour and perches on his own head the mitre of the fat Abbot, or drags the bedclothes off the awakened duchess. Above each cut is a text of Scripture in Latin, and below a moralising verse in French.

The theme of the "Dance of Death" is aptly portrayed by Austin Dobson in the *chant royal* inspired by Holbein's prints:

> "He is the despot's Despot. All must bide
> Later or soon, the message of his might
> . . . The stately Queen his bidding must obey:
> No keen-eyed Cardinal shall him affray:
> And to the Dame that wantoneth he saith—
> 'Let be, Sweet-heart, to junket and to play.'
> There is no King more terrible than Death."

And to one of the finest of the cuts he gives these memorable lines:

"Nay, the tired Ploughman,—at the sinking ray,—
In the last furrow,—feels an icy breath,
And knows a hand hath turned the team astray.
There is no King more terrible than Death."

A new invention at the beginning of the sixteenth century was the printing of woodcuts in chiaroscuro, first used to give the effect of a drawing in black on a coloured ground, with high lights of white or gold. Italy claimed the invention in the person of Ugo da Carpi, who in 1516 addressed a letter to the Doge and Senate of Venice, demanding a patent for his new discovery. But the first Italian chiaroscuro is dated 1518, while the first German one is dated 1508. The process was to print from two or three blocks, superimposed on the paper, which originally was tinted by hand. At first two outline-blocks were used, but later the second outline was abandoned, and the second block was a tone-block only. In German chiaroscuro prints the black outline was always retained; in Italian cuts it was frequently dispensed with. Many of the woodcuts of Ugo da Carpi are from tone-blocks only.

Lucas Cranach produced chiaroscuro cuts, an example of which, "St. George," is in the British Museum. Others were done by Burgkmair and Jost de Negker, who is credited with the invention of the tone-block. Italy, which

had never been enthusiastic about wood-engraving, took chiaroscuro cuts to its heart. Ugo da Carpi reproduced in this process drawings by Raphael, Parmegiano and Titian, and lesser men followed in his steps. It is to be noted that in Germany the reproduction of a picture or drawing in a woodcut was quite unknown.

The sixteenth century witnessed a decline in wood-engraving which persisted through two centuries until the appearance of Thomas Bewick. The art did not entirely die out, but it was driven underground, and the record of its subterranean activities presents little of real interest. Some of the ornament designers, such as Jost Amman and Virgil Solis, executed a few designs for wood, but the chief function of the woodcut during this period of submersion was to illustrate the cheaper type of book. In the sixteenth century were published some attractive herbals, with woodcuts of different plants, and illustrated histories of animals and cosmographies were equally favoured. In the succeeding century the art declined still further, and existed only in broadsides and the ever-popular chap-books. The only cuts of real merit during this period are Christoffel Jeghers' reproductions of designs by Rubens. The popular cuts of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries are of no artistic value, but are nevertheless interesting in their continuance of the type of the incunabula. They have the same simplicity of representation, and the same naïve appeal.

Thomas Bewick
Vignette
Wood Engraving

Thomas Bewick
Vignette
Wood Engraving

The first hint of a possible revival appeared in the work of Jean Michel Papillon, who was born in 1698. He had a passionate interest in wood-engraving, and published in 1766 a history entitled "Traité historique et pratique de la gravure en Bois." His own work consisted mainly of small book-illustrations, of which the most that can be said is that they are pretty. The real revival came some years later with the work of Thomas Bewick. Whether his so-called "white line method" was entirely his invention is not of any importance; he was certainly the first to demonstrate the possibilities of the wood when handled in this manner, which simply means working on the end grain of boxwood, instead of on the plank, and using the graver instead of the knife. This results in the untouched surfaces printing black, with white lines where the tool has cut, and is thus a direct reversal of the older method. The increased elasticity of this method offers far more scope to the artist. Bewick was born in 1753 at Cherryburn, near Newcastle-on-Tyne. At the age of fourteen he was apprenticed to Ralph Beilby, a copperplate engraver in Newcastle, where he always showed a particular aptitude for work in wood, and in 1777 he was taken into partnership with Beilby. His younger brother, John, entered the business as apprentice at the same time, and the first book Bewick published, the "Select Fables" of 1784, has illustrations by both brothers. In 1790 appeared

the "General History of Quadrupeds," which has established itself as a landmark in the history of wood-engraving. The cuts are unequal in design; the more exotic animals, which Bewick could never have seen, are rather frigid and academic, but they are more than compensated for by the sympathetic mastery with which the common English beasts are handled. Beilby was responsible for the text of the book. In 1789 the famous "Chillingham Wild Bull" was published. The value to the collector of the earlier prints from this block is purely fortuitous, owing to the fact that after a limited number were taken the block split and in later prints the join still shows. It is an extremely skilful combination of the two methods of wood-engraving, but is perhaps a trifle dull, and at all events not to be compared for interest with the little vignettes of country scenes on which Bewick's reputation now mainly rests. These were designed for head and tail-pieces, and they give the impression of having afforded the artist far more pleasure than his more elaborate compositions. They are perfect snapshots of daily life; a drunken miller lying behind a hedge, an old man going to market on a windy day, a man with a gun in a snowy field, a beggar woman attacked by a gander, a child pulling a horse's tail while its nurse runs to the rescue.

The faults of the "Quadrupeds" are avoided in the "History of British Birds," the first part

EDWARD CALVERT

The Cyder Feast

Wood Engraving

of which, "Land Birds", appeared in 1797, and "Water Birds," in 1804. The water-colour drawings in the British Museum show how carefully the details of each bird were studied from nature. They have something of the charm of the vignettes, and something of the same feeling for all the little sights and sounds of the country. Bewick died in 1828, back again in his beloved Cherryburn.

Bewick's white line was employed by William Blake for the only woodcuts he ever did. These were the seventeen cuts illustrating the third edition of Dr. R. J. Thornton's "Eclogues of Virgil", which appeared in 1821. The blocks were severely pruned down to fit the page, and were worked over by professional wood engravers, but one or two sets of proofs survive taken from eight of the blocks before they were touched by other hands. The subjects are "pastoral," and are treated in a bold and summary manner which was the very antithesis of the careful technique of the Bewick School. Needless to say, they made no stir at the time of their appearance, but even apart from their intrinsic merits, they are of great importance as providing the initial inspiration for the work of Edward Calvert and Samuel Palmer. Calvert, who abandoned the Navy to become an artist, had already found himself before he met Blake, for the "Cyder Feast" was designed in his early youth. But all the same, his debt to Blake must have been

immense. Both were mystics, but while for Blake earthly forms served only as a medium to express the abstraction of his thought, for Calvert the mystical light irradiated every object in nature. Unconsciously or not, he was a pure pantheist. He produced only seven woodcuts, which are among the most perfect of their kind. The "Cyder Feast" is perhaps the most famous, but the "Chamber Idyll," the "Lady and the Rooks," and "The Brook" are equally beautiful. "The Ploughman" shows the technical influence of Blake rather more than the others, and is not quite so true to Calvert's subtle and delicate mind. Only two line engravings are known, "The Bride" and "The Sheep of His Pasture." These are all the work of Calvert's early years, and he never again approached their perfection.

Most guide-books to Old Prints are inclined to omit or to slur over the question of the wood-engraving, and collectors of woodcuts, as Sir F. Wedmore emphasised some twenty-five years ago, are scanty in the extreme. In his day woodcuts were hopelessly out of fashion as objects of research, and even now they seldom appear in the sale-room. And it is true that the woodcut, as has been indicated already, belongs far more to the bibliophile than to the print-collector. Nevertheless, the modern achievement in the revival of the woodcut, both in France and England, must necessarily cause the collector to think more closely about the sterling value of the past master-

pieces from the wood-block, masterpieces that can often be obtained for shillings when those of etching or engraving command pounds. Wood-engraving is something much more than "an ancient, quaint and pregnant art." And the revival of interest in woodcuts is reflected in the increasingly high prices commanded by the early prints. In the Spring of 1927 a large collection of woodcuts, containing many items from the collection formed at Dresden by King Frederick Augustus II of Saxony, was sold by Messrs. Boerner at Leipzig, and high prices were obtained for the work of Cranach and Springinklee, but the most astonishing prices were those fetched for two Cranachs of 1502. A unique and recently discovered "Agony in the Garden" went for £1,350, and its companion, a "Crucifixion," for £1,000.[1]

[1] Here, and in other cases, foreign sums in marks and francs have been turned into the approximate equivalent in sterling.

CHAPTER II

EARLY LINE-ENGRAVING

LINE-ENGRAVINGS present a technique almost exactly the reverse of that of the relief-cuts dealt with in the preceding chapter. The engraving is done on copper in intaglio, that is, the lines are ploughed out in the surface of the copper, filled with ink, and the paper pressed into them to take the impression. The tool used is the graver or burin—a steel bar, of a lozenge section, ground at the end to an angle to make a cutting point. The graver is held with the handle pressed against the palm, while the thumb and forefinger guide the point, which is pushed forwards. Very often the first drawing on the plate is done with the etching-needle, and the bitten lines are afterwards worked over with the graver. The lines can be made to vary in thickness according to the amount of pressure put on the burin, and the different tones and textures are built up by means of long and short lines, dashes, flicks and dots.

The art of engraving on metal, like that of wood-cutting, had been known for a long time

before the first prints were made, but it has a considerably more ancient and respectable pedigree than wood-cutting, for the goldsmith's craft was one which from the earliest antiquity had been held in the highest esteem and attracted workers of the greatest skill. Naturally, the first designers of engraved prints were the goldsmiths, and the immense superiority in artistic excellence of early engravings over early woodcuts can be attributed to the severe training in drawing which was necessary to equip a goldsmith for the practice of his own craft. Probably the success achieved by the early makers of religious woodcuts first suggested to the goldsmiths that they, too, might try their hands at a process in which they rapidly outstripped their exemplars. It was natural, too, that the goldsmith, at some early period, should find that he could rub off on paper, for future reference, the pattern which he had engraved on a cup or a gun barrel.

Germany again appears to have been the pioneer, and the earliest known engravings can be assigned to the second quarter of the fifteenth century. At the very beginning of the craft we meet an artist of much charm in the Master of the Playing Cards, who worked about 1430–40. He was obviously head and shoulders above his contemporaries, and his work is strong and direct, with a manner of shading at once simple and effective. His large and rare engraving of "The Virgin Mary with Lilith beneath her feet" is

worthy to rank with the best productions of a far more matured age. His influence is clearly marked in the work of the Master of 1446, despite the latter's more timid handling, and he had also a direct influence on an artist of much greater importance, the Master E. S. of 1466. E. S. makes a great advance by differentiating engraving as a medium for pictorial composition from the purely decorative treatment natural to the goldsmith's craft. But the limitations of the goldsmith still hamper his work; he is obsessed by the goldsmith's love of incidental decorative detail, almost overshadowing the central figures of his composition, and the figures themselves are conceived merely as silhouettes. Nevertheless there is at least an attempt at the comprehension of the figure in the round, which it was left to Schongauer to realise fully. The often-mentioned influence of the Van Eycks on his work has left no trace of the Flemish realism: it is noteworthy indeed that the delicate feeling for naturalistic landscape, which Hubert Van Eyck was the first to express, has had no effect on the work of either the Master E. S. or of Schongauer.

Midway between the archaic groping of the Master E. S. and the full mastery of Dürer, stands Martin Schongauer, the first of the engravers who was not primarily a goldsmith. He was a native of Kolmar, in Alsace, where he was born about 1445, and 115 of his plates are known, all bearing M S in monogram. His

early work is very similar, in its silhouette forms and lack of modelling, to that of E. S., under whom he may have studied, but even the early plates display his power of composition, which is perhaps explained by the tradition that he was at one time a pupil in Flanders of Roger van der Weyden. At all events he had a sound training in painting before attempting the engraver's art. Of his early plates, the "March to Calvary" and "St. Michael and the Dragon" reach a high level, in spite of their adherence to traditional types, while the "Temptation of St. Anthony" is inspired by the pure spirit of Gothic grotesque in the realism of its fantastic figures. In his later period Schongauer abandons to a large extent the traditions and limitations of Gothic art, and concentrates the interest more and more on the central theme, which finally is often no more than a single figure. Remarkable in his work is his preoccupation with ideal beauty, possibly learnt in the school of Flanders, which is in sharp contrast with his predecessors and contemporaries of the early German school. His treatment of drapery is very distinctive in its simple and dignified handling, its broad unbroken masses and stiff folds, and although he is obviously ignorant of anatomy, so that his figures are too exaggerated and attenuated, he does nevertheless see them in the round and not as adjuncts to a decorative background. His finest plate, "Christ appearing to Mary Magdalene," is full of serene beauty

and of that delicate remoteness from reality which constitutes the chief charm of archaic art.

The Master of the Amsterdam Cabinet owes his title to the fact that the finest collection of his work happens to be in the Rijks Museum at Amsterdam. His art, however, has no connection with Holland, but belongs much more evidently to the Rhenish School. It is generally agreed that he was the first engraver to use dry-point, and his delicate work could yield few impressions. His light and free treatment of figures, whether in genre scenes, such as the "Dog scratching his Neck," or in sacred subjects such as "Solomon's Idolatry," is happily original and free from all restraints of tradition. He owes little to his predecessors, and stands alone in his individuality of outlook and technique. His originality and the brilliance of his work set him, beside the Master E. S. and Schongauer, among the great masters before Dürer.

Thus the full stream flows, from the Master of the Playing Cards through the Master E. S., Schongauer, and the Master of the Amsterdam Cabinet to the broad sea of Dürer, and if in these products of the rough northern soil one misses the somewhat cloying beauty of the Florentines, it is perhaps compensated for by the breath that blows through them of the fresh northern Spring.

Whether Germany did in fact take the lead in the invention of engraving is still a disputed point, but at all events Italy was not far behind.

There is no doubt that in Italy the discovery of engraving was quite independent of any suggestion from Germany, though some years later there is evidence of an interchange of ideas between the two countries. In fact, as far as the actual technique of cutting designs on metal was concerned, Italy had a definite advantage over Germany in the popularity of the art of niello engraving, which, though independent of the art of engraving designs for the purpose of printing them off on paper, was precisely similar in method. In niello engraving a small metal plate, usually of silver but sometimes of gold, was delicately engraved in a minute design, and the lines were then filled with a black substance, compounded of copper, lead, sulphur and silver, so that the design stood out in black on the bright metal background. Obviously it would be a very simple matter to take an impression on paper from an engraved niello plate, and this was in fact frequently done, but it would be very far from the truth to infer that in this practice lay the origin of Italian engraving. On the contrary, it was probably the influence of the engravers that caused the niellists to adapt their art to this extension of its function.

Vasari relates that the invention of engraving was due to the Florentine niellist, Maso Finiguerra. This statement has been long disproved but, like most legends, it contains the germ of truth. The earliest Italian engravings are before

Finiguerra's time—he died in 1464 at the age of thirty-eight But early Florentine prints can be divided into two main groups, the Fine Manner group and the Broad Manner group, and the Fine Manner prints can be stated with reasonable certainty to have proceeded from Finiguerra's workshop. We know that Finiguerra was a goldsmith, and famous for his niellos, and the engravings from his own hand reveal all the characteristics that might be expected from such a craftsman. The technique is very close to that of niello, and the work is fine and delicate, with close cross-hatching which gives a blurred effect to the shadows. There is a profusion of "goldsmith's ornament"; over-rich details of great beauty and charm, which distract the attention from the general design and give the print the effect of a highly decorative pattern arranged to fill a given surface. It is not very easy to distinguish the engravings of Finiguerra's own hand from those of his school produced under his immediate supervision, but the seven plates of the "Planets," the "Road to Calvary" and the "Crucifixion," the "Fight for the Hose," and the "Judgment Hall of Pilate," are almost certainly his own work. They are very closely related in manner to a book of Florentine drawings in the British Museum, known as the "Picture Chronicle of the World," which has also been attributed to Finiguerra. After his death, in 1464, his school carried on the traditions of the Fine Manner, and among their productions

are the series of "Prophets" and "Sibyls." Many of the designs in the "Prophets" series have been closely copied from the "Apostles" set of the Master E. S.

These two series have acquired a great additional interest from the fact that there exist contemporary copies of them in the Broad Manner. This was essentially a painter's style, as opposed to the goldsmith's style of the Fine Manner, and it first appeared about 1470. The method of engraving in the Broad Manner produces a result somewhat similar to that of a pen-and-ink drawing, with shading done in open parallel lines. The general effect also is quite different from that of the Fine Manner, for the decorative accessories which so delighted the heart of the goldsmith are severely pruned, and the central figures of the composition stand out simply and clearly. Among Broad Manner prints the two series of the "Life of the Virgin and of Christ" and the "Triumphs of Petrarch" are the most important, but the masterpiece in this style and the undoubted masterpiece of early Florentine engraving is the "Battle of Naked Men" by Antonio Pollaiuolo. This appears to be his only plate, and the strength of its design and the nervous force of its execution place it among the great prints of the fifteenth century.

The last of the Florentines of this period is Cristofano Robetta, who began to work towards the close of the fifteenth century. The distinction

between the Broad and the Fine Manner seems to have disappeared about this time, and the chief influence to be observed in Italian engraving of the early sixteenth century is that of Dürer. Robetta copied one of Schongauer's prints, and northern influence is very strongly marked in the Gothic landscapes against which he sets his charming but wavering figures. "Ceres" and "Youth: Captive and Free" are very attractive compositions, although the drawing is uncertain and the planes not very sure of themselves.

Turning from Florence to the other schools of engraving in North Italy, an insoluble problem presents itself in the "Tarocchi cards of Mantegna," which are not Tarocchi and are not by Mantegna. They are a series of fifty instructive prints, illustrating Men, Muses, Art, Virtues, and Planets, and there are two different sets which are either copies of one another or both copies of a single original. One set is engraved with precision and skill, but is stiff and archaic in handling; the other is drawn with freedom and vigour, but the execution is faulty and careless. Possibly their origin should be looked for in Ferrara.

Besides Pollaiuolo, the only other artist of the first rank who practised engraving in Italy at this time was Andrea Mantegna, of Padua. What influence, if any, he and Pollaiuolo had upon each other, we shall never know, but their work is very similar. Mantegna's engravings approximate to the Broad Manner method in the effect

which they produce of a pen drawing, and his manner of shading in parallel lines with a return stroke between them is precisely the method used by Polliauolo in his one great plate. Mantegna was born in 1431, and died in 1506 at Mantua. Of the many plates formerly attributed to him, only seven are now considered to be genuine. They are the "Virgin and Child," "Bacchanals with Silenus," "Bacchanals with a Wine-Press," the two plates of the "Battle of the Tritons and Sea-gods," the horizontal "Entombment" and the "Risen Christ between SS. Andrew and Longinus." None of these is either signed or dated, but the chronological sequence appears to be in the order given. A central date is fixed by the fact that there are in the Albertina, Vienna, drawings copied by Dürer from the "Bacchanals with Silenus" and the "Battle of the Sea gods," and dated 1494. The seven prints all show the same qualities of firm outline, subtlety of modelling, and delicacy of shading, but the last is only seen to advantage in a really fine early impression, for the cross-lines of the shading were hardly more than scratched on the plate, and can have only survived a few printings. The other engravings formerly attributed to Mantegna are now recognised as the work of his followers, in some cases working directly from his designs, as in the "Flagellation" and "Christ in Limbo." Zoan Andrea, who impartially copied Dürer, the Master of the

Sforza Book of Hours and Leonardo da Vinci, may be responsible for some of these engravings. Giovanni Antonio da Brescia certainly produced several, including "Hercules and the Lion" and "Hercules and Antaeus." Nicoletto da Modena copied Mantegna's designs in his earlier works, but soon developed a style of his own under the influence of Dürer.

Venice seems to have taken to engraving rather later than the other towns of North Italy, and the first name in Venetian work in this medium is that of Jacopo de' Barbari, none of whose engravings can be earlier than 1490. His earlier work shows shading in the parallel lines characteristic of Mantegna and his school, but later he takes to close cross-hatching, probably under the influence of Dürer. His work always has too much the effect of a drawing, and shows no real appreciation of the essential quality of the engraved line. Girolamo Mocetto's engravings are strongly influenced by Vivarini and Bellini, but are spoiled by careless technique, and are not of much importance. Giulio Campagnola is more interesting, and is obviously inspired by Giorgione. He evolved a system of shading by means of tiny flicks of the graver, producing almost the effect of stipple, with which he was able to procure very soft and delicate gradations of tone.

Towards the close of the fifteenth century there appeared three great artists, Dürer, Lucas van Leyden, and Marcantonio Raimondi, whose work

showed what hitherto undreamed of possibilities were open to the art of engraving. Dürer is incomparably the greatest of the three, and is in many respects the greatest master of line-engraving the world has ever seen. His engravings naturally display those qualities of strength of composition and certainty of line which made his woodcuts so remarkable an advance on anything that had been executed previously, but, in addition, the wider technical scope offered by the medium of copper made possible the expression of a deeper spiritual content. In his woodcuts Dürer is the pure sixteenth century German artist, working to a great extent among the intellectual limitations of his period, and hampered by Gothic tradition; in his engravings he is the son of the Renaissance, fertilised by the new spirit that was blowing from Italy, but strong enough in his independence to give it a purely German expression, and so to transfuse Italian ideals into his own masterly technique that those from whom he had learnt must learn again from him.

Dürer's earliest dated engraving is the "Four Nude Women," of 1497, though this was probably not his first plate. Even at this time, some years before that meeting with Jacopo de' Barbari which influenced him so strongly, Dürer has responded to the pagan feeling for the beauty of the human body which the Renaissance had roused again in Italy. But this plate shows

promise only, as do the "Holy Family with the Dragon-fly," the "Offer of Love," and the "St. Jerome." The "Prodigal Son" is the first plate to reveal the hand of the master, despite some uncertainty in the drawing. But the "Coat-of-Arms with the Skull" of 1503 shows a pitch of technical facility which has never been and could not be surpassed. The close cross-hatching used for the shading renders perfectly the difference in texture of the various surfaces, and is especially striking in the representation of the polished steel of the helmet. If this plate is compared with an engraving by Mantegna, whose work Dürer had studied carefully, it will be evident how great an advance Dürer had made in the comprehension of the full possibilities of the engraved line. The "Adam and Eve" of 1504 is far more Italian than German in inspiration, and owes much to Jacopo de' Barbari. It is not quite certain when the two first met, for it has not been definitely established whether Dürer visited Venice during his *Wander-jähre*, but the Italian artist was in Nuremberg in 1505, and Dürer was in Venice in the following winter. We know that Dürer was impelled to his careful observation of the proportions of the human figure by a drawing of Jacopo de' Barbari of a "man and woman, drawn according to a canon of proportion." The "Adam and Eve" was the result of this study. To this period also belong the "Great Fortune," with its fascinating land-

Albrecht Dürer

The Nativity

Line Engraving

scape below the winged figure, and the "St. Eustace," his largest plate. These are executed in a subtle and detailed manner, with a great deal of work in very fine lines, which could not stand much printing. This may have been the reason for the change in technique which appears in the engravings completed after his return from Venice in 1507. The lines are now more deeply cut, and consequently produce a firmer and more solid effect. The sixteen plates of the "Passion" series were begun about 1507, to which year belongs the "Descent from the Cross," and were finished in 1513, the year of the "Peter and John." The later plates show the final emancipation of Northern art from Gothic tradition, for the delightful accessory landscapes have given place to a deeply-shaded background which concentrates the attention entirely on the central figures. About this time Dürer began experimenting with dry-point. "The Angel with the Sudarium," which appeared in 1510, exists now in two impressions only, and was followed in 1512 by the "Man of Sorrows" and "St. Jerome in the Wilderness." The latter is a magnificent print, utilising fully the rich effect produced by the burr of dry-point, but Dürer did not continue with this medium, perhaps because the delicacy of dry-point makes it impossible to take from it more than a few really good prints. The summit of Dürer's achievement in engraving was reached about 1512–1514. In these years there appeared

his three most famous plates, the "Knight, Death and the Devil," which is rather too obvious in its allegorical appeal, the "St. Jerome in his Study," perhaps the most attractive of his works in any medium, and the "Melancholia." To this period also belong the "Virgin by the Town Wall," the "Virgin with the Tree," the "Sudarium held by two Angels," and many others of equal brilliance. After this time the engravings appear at longer intervals. "St. Anthony before the Town," of 1519, is the most charming example of his later work.

Dürer may be regarded as the originator of the engraved as well as of the woodcut portrait, though in neither medium does he display the essential genius of the portraitist which makes the spirit of the sitter shine through the pictured features. The most successful is the portrait of "Friedrich the Wise of Saxony," 1524. There are two engravings, belonging respectively to 1519 and 1523, of "Albrecht of Brandenburg," and "Wilibald Pirkheimer," and "Erasmus," appeared in 1526, to which year also belongs the "Philip Melancthon."

Lucas van Leyden suddenly stands out as the only great exponent of engraving in the Netherlands. The fifteenth century does not seem to have produced as much engraving in the Netherlands as in Germany or Italy, and almost the only name before the time of Lucas van Leyden is that of the Master of Zwolle. Van Leyden, if

he was really born in 1494, was an accomplished engraver by his fourteenth year, for the "Monk Sergius Killed by Mahomet" appeared in 1508, and showed an already mature power of composition. It is in this quality that Lucas van Leyden's merit chiefly lies, for he never succeeded in mastering fully the structure of the human form, and unexpected distortions constantly mar his best plates. The Netherlands have always possessed a very strongly marked national character, which expresses itself in a quite individual art, and Lucas van Leyden is at his best in the early plates, in which he was inspired by the interest in simple humanity which marks his country's art. The "Cowherd and the Milkmaid" of 1510 is thoroughly Dutch in sentiment, and the modelling of the cows shows a precision and observation which was beyond his reach when it came to dealing with human figures. But he had also the national power of depicting emotion, and this, combined with his subtle and delicate work with the burin, places in the first rank the great "Ecce Homo," of 1510, the "Adoration of the Kings" of 1513, the "David playing before Saul," and the "Christ and the Magdalene," though it is still in such genre scenes as "Two Pilgrims Resting," and the "Village Surgeon" that he seems to be most at home. Unfortunately this promise of anticipating the achievements of seventeenth century Dutch art was not realised. He had always been

to some extent under the influence of Dürer, and after his meeting with the great German, which occurred during the latter's journey to the Netherlands in 1520, he completely abandoned his own individuality and modelled his style on that of Dürer. The prints he produced after 1520, such as the "Joachim and Anna," the "Passion" of 1521, and the "Musicians" of 1524, have an air of studied deliberation, resulting from the failure of spontaneity. Eight years later there came a more disastrous change, when he threw Dürer overboard and accepted a fresh deity in the person of Marcantonio Raimondi. Dutch art has never been able to stand the assimilation of Italian ideals, as can be seen from the example of Mabuse and Bernaert van Orley, and Lucas van Leyden was considerably less successful with his Italian model than he had been when following Dürer. The plates of this period, such as the seven "Virtues," "Mars and Venus," "Adam and Eve," and "Lot and his Daughters", only show to what depths a fine talent can be degraded by disregarding its own inner light. Lucas van Leyden had no followers. Had he maintained the purely Dutch character of his early work he might have founded a school which would have been strong enough to withstand the tide of the Italian classicism which swamped the art of the Netherlands for a hundred years.

Marcantonio Raimondi's work, fine as it is, has

had an influence altogether out of proportion to its artistic merits. For he was the first great exponent of reproductive engraving, that is, of engraving which either accurately copies or freely interprets the pictures and drawings of a painter. The ease of this method naturally commended itself to a host of craftsmen who possessed the necessary technical facility while lacking completely the imaginative power which is essential to artistic creation. It was not until the development of photography that engraving ceased to be subservient to painting, and it is only now beginning once again to recover its old power of original expression. None of Marcantonio's plates is original from beginning to end, and very often they are composed of a medley of adaptations from designs by various hands. But he had what, for the reproductive engraver, is the essential quality of a sensitive and receptive mind: he could enter perfectly into the spirit of his exemplar, and the delicate mastery of his technique enabled him to give full expression to the meaning of his original.

Marcantonio was born at Bologna about 1480, and was apprenticed to the niellist, Francesco Francia. His earliest dated print is the " Pyramus and Thisbe " of 1505. He began very soon to copy from Dürer the details of landscape backgrounds and the treatment of trees, and in 1506 he reproduced on copper the seventeen plates of the woodcut " Life of the Virgin." He signed

these with Dürer's monogram, a proceeding which elicited a complaint from the artist in person to the Venetian Senate in 1506. Marcantonio copied in all about eighty of Dürer's plates. About 1510 he departed for Rome, breaking the journey in Florence, where he produced "The Bathers," which reproduces a group of figures from Michelangelo's cartoon of "The Battle of Pisa." He added a landscape background copied from Lucas van Leyden's "Mahomet and the Monk Sergius." In Rome there began that connection with Raphael which has added so much lustre to Marcantonio's name. Raphael and Marcantonio were made for each other. The soft and sentimental style of the great painter exactly suited the gracefulness of Marcantonio's technique, and the spiritual content of Raphael's pictures was not beyond Marcantonio's limited reach. In fact he so much absorbed the inspiration of Raphael that from a hasty sketch he could produce a finished engraving with every detail perfectly in the spirit of the master. Their co-operation lasted until Raphael's death in 1520. Among the finest prints are "The Death of Lucretia," the "Massacre of the Innocents," the "Holy Family under the Palm-Tree," and the "Judgment of Paris." In his later work Marcantonio adopted a more open and summary system of shading, which produces a rather harsh effect. "Cupid and Psyche," from the frescoes in the Farnesina, and the "Martyrdom of St.

Laurence," after Bandinelli, are typical examples of his later style. After the sack of Rome, in 1527, Marcantonio seems to have returned to Bologna, but nothing more is heard of him until 1534, when he is spoken of as dead.

The so-called Little Masters were a group of German engravers of the early sixteenth century, who were influenced almost equally by Dürer and by Italy. Their prints are on the most minute scale, measuring only a few inches, and within this small space they find room for a mass of exquisitely handled detail. They are "little" in their conceptions as well as in their prints; they never aspire to the deeper motives of art, but delineate scenes of daily life in a picturesque manner which delighted the hearts of the solid German townsfolk. Not that they confined themselves to genre pictures; biblical, classical and allegorical motives share the honours equally, but it has been well said that "whatever the subject, the approach to it is genre."

Albrecht Altdorfer, who died in 1538, was the oldest of the group. His work is largely influenced by Italian niello engraving, and is always unmistakably individual in its treatment of landscape backgrounds. Such prints as "Horatius Cocles Leaping into the Tiber" are no more than competent engravings, but there is an imaginative quality about his steep hills and turreted towns, glimpsed through the tasseled boughs of

larches which makes them unique in the art of this time.

The brothers Hans Sebald and Barthel Beham, of Nuremberg, worked very much under the influence of Dürer. Hans Sebald Beham has the most skilful technique among the Little Masters, and achieves very subtle gradations of tone by means of little dots. After his early phase of imitating Dürer, he followed Marcantonio, reaching the height of his powers about 1530. His finely worked plates could not stand much printing, and towards the end of his life he spent much time in reworking his old plates. Among his finest prints are the "Moses and Aaron" of 1526, and the "Prodigal Son" of 1538, but he is most at home in pure genre scenes, such as the "Standard Bearer and Drummer" of 1525. Barthel Beham is an artist of much greater insight. His portraits, among which the best is perhaps that of the Emperor Charles V, show a power of grasping the personality of the sitter which Dürer never possessed, and his charming plate of the "Virgin and Child at a Window" is one of the masterpieces of the period.

Georg Pencz, of Nuremberg, who was a contemporary of the Behams, specialised mainly in subjects taken from the ancient legends of Italy, which he succeeded in handling in a thoroughly German manner. He uses the Behams' system of shading in dots, and is perhaps unique

H. S. Beham
Young Woman and Death
Line Engraving

J. Binck
So-called Self-Portrait
Line Engraving

among artists of his time in that not a single Madonna ever came from his hand.

Heinrich Aldegrever (1502-1555) of Zoest, in Westphalia, reveals traces of the influence of the Italianised painters of the Netherlands school, such as Mabuse and Bernaert van Orley. His figures are rather exaggerated, but his composition is sound and his technique delicate and careful. His portrait plates are very good, especially perhaps "Johann Bockhold, King of the Anabaptists," but his fame rests principally on his prints of ornament.

Under the heading of Engraved Ornament are included original working designs, etched or engraved on copper from the sixteenth century onwards, for various handicrafts, especially for the work of the goldsmith or jeweller, as well as designs for furniture, textiles, ironwork, architectural details, interior decorations, and ornaments of every kind. From the earliest days of engraving it was the practice of the craftsmen, particularly of the goldsmiths, to engrave and sometimes to publish these designs. These patterns travelled all over Europe, and even when they were not actually copied they acted as a basis to establish and influence style. They are often of extraordinary interest and beauty, and are of great value as a source of reference for the identification of objects of art. This no doubt is the reason for the immense collections of Engraved Ornament in the Kunstgewerbe Museum

in Berlin, the Museum für Kunst und Industrie in Vienna, the Bibliothèque Nationale and the Musée des Arts Decoratifs in Paris, the Germanisches Museum in Nuremberg, and the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, which contains the only large collection in Great Britain.

One of the earliest Masters of Engraved Ornament in the pure Gothic manner was Israhel van Meckenem, who died in 1503. The Little Masters, notably Aldegrever, the Behams and Pencz, were prolific in designs for goldsmith's work, box lids, dagger and knife handles, etc., and produced work of dazzling brilliance of execution. Virgil Solis, of Nuremberg, made many competent but uninspiring ornament designs. About the middle of the sixteenth century Flindt, Zan, Wechter and the Master of 1551 produced many designs for cups and beakers in the finest style of their period, many of which are done with a dotted outline. Fine examples of engravers such as Zan or Wechter seldom come into the market and will cost the collector from £20 to £50 each, and at Leipzig in 1927 a superb set of the rare ornament prints by Schongauer realised an average of £330 apiece, while the finest existing impressions of two ornament prints by the Master E. S. fetched £800 each. There is, however, a wide field among the work of the less known artists, and fine prints of such men as Solis, De Bry, and Mignot can be obtained at a much lower figure. The scope of the collector

Heinrich Aldegrever
Panel of Ornament
Line Engraving

H. S. Beham
Panel of Ornament
Line Engraving

of ornament has a very wide and full range among the numerous decorative designs of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

Though fewer collectors have specialised in Ornament than in prints of a more purely pictorial interest, Engraved Ornament has always had its vogue, as was shown, for instance, by the Lanna Sale at Stuttgart in 1910. Prices then were comparatively low, one of the highest being £80 for a set of rings by Woeiriot. One of the greatest collectors of Ornament was Monsieur E. Foulc, of Paris, who spent fifty years in gathering work by all the chief designers and architects from the sixteenth to the end of the eighteenth century. His collection, which was by far the largest and most valuable of its kind outside a Museum, formed the main source of information for M. Guilmard in 1880, when he published his "Maîtres Ornemanistes." The Foulc collection is said to have been bought at a very high price by the late Mr. Pierpont Morgan, but found its way back to the Sale Room in Paris in 1914, and nearly all its superb contents were bought by M. Doucet for the Bibliothèque d'Art. The Woeiriot rings had risen to £230, and high prices were obtained for the work of Flindt, Zundt, Hirtz, Laechlin, Flötner, and others. In England the only collectors of Engraved Ornament on a large scale were apparently the late brothers Max and Maurice Rosenheim. Their collection was sold at Sotheby's in 1923, and large portions

of it were bought for the Victoria and Albert Museum.

In France no school of Engraving arose until the end of the sixteenth century. The work produced prior to this date was founded with happy impartiality on Dürer and on Italian models. The combination of these two influences in about equal proportions is responsible for much of the charm of Jean Duvet, the only outstanding artist at this early period in France. He was born in 1480, and his principal achievement was the twenty-four plates of the "Apocalypse." His technique is far from sound, combining faulty drawing with an irregular system of shading, but in this set, in spite of his dependence on Dürer, he shows a power of expressing mystical conceptions in concrete images that makes him not unworthy to be considered a forerunner of William Blake. The only other name in French Engraving of this period is that of the ornament designer, Étienne Delaune, who is one of the great masters in this type of work.

The finer work of the great Renaissance Engravers and their predecessors seldom appears in the sale room. For generations it has been gradually absorbed into national collections, and as a rule all we can do is to study and admire and envy: *Non cuivis contingit adire Corinthum.* But if one can afford a fine print in good condition by one of the masters mentioned in this chapter it is probably a safer investment than Consols.

LUCAS VAN LEYDEN

The Cow-herd and the Milkmaid

Line Engraving

It was not without reason that in those post-war years when German marks were many thousands to the pound sterling, the wealthy German was buying Dürer and Schongauer at prices with which even the Bond Street dealer could not compete without dismay.

In all the history of prints and print-collecting the tendency has been for certain outstanding prints by every artist, universally considered as his masterpieces, to command exceptionally high prices. Dürer's "Adam and Eve," for instance, will cost, in fine condition, £1,000 or more. At Leipzig, in 1927, the Hagens impression of the "Adam and Eve," one of the finest in existence, went to America at £2,100. As far back as 1911 a perfect proof of "Melancholy" realised £500, and would probably cost three times as much to-day. Schongauer's prints are extremely rare and valuable, and a fine early impression of such engravings as "Christ bearing the Cross" or "Christ appearing to Mary Magdalene" will command a sale-room price of many hundreds. Even the little round heraldic engravings, which could have been bought for £10 or so apiece in 1914, have now risen to a price of about £40 to £50 each. At Messrs. Boerner's sale at Leipzig in May, 1928, "The Judgment of Solomon," by the engraver known as FVB, fetched £1,550 and a "Lamentation for Christ," by I. van Meckenem, after the Master E. S., £1,050. But this need not daunt the collector whose purse is more shallow,

for there is a descending scale. "St. Eustace" and the "Virgin with the Pear," for example, were sold at Christie's in 1919 for £330 and £56 respectively, and many fine engravings by Dürer can be obtained for less than the latter price. With luck and knowledge good examples of Dürer's smaller engravings and his woodcuts, the less well known engravings of Schongauer, and prints by the Little Masters, and others, may be picked up for a few pounds a piece—at prices, in fact, which, considering the quality of the work, are entirely out of proportion to the high ransom commanded by the few accepted and widely-known masterpieces. One has also always to take into consideration passing changes of fashion. In the days of the Grand Tour, when Raphael was the deity of the connoisseur, Marcantonio's prints were an essential for every portfolio. Remember Browning:

> "I keep my prints in imbroglio,
> Fifty in one portfolio.
> When somebody tries my claret,
> We turn round chairs to the fire
> . . . Then I exhibit my treasure.
> After we've turned over twenty,
> And the debt of wonder my crony owes
> Is paid to my Marc Antonios. . . ."

In 1868, at the Marochetti Sale, not a single Mantegna rose above ten guineas, while Marcantonio's "Adam and Eve in Paradise" cost Mr.

Colnaghi £136 and the "Saint Cecilia," £51. There would be a curious reversal now. In the Holford Sale of 1893 Marcantonio's "Plague" fetched the enormous price of £370, while about twenty-five years ago the "Saint Cecilia" and the "Lucretia" fetched £25 and £170 in a great sale. The same impressions might fetch as much now, but in most of Marcantonio's prices there has been a very marked decline.

CHAPTER III

LINE-ENGRAVING TO 1850

THE end of the sixteenth and the beginning of the seventeenth century witnessed an enormous increase in the production of engravings, though chiefly of a very mediocre type. Instead of being, as hitherto, the concern of artists of eminence, from whom they passed directly to the public, engravings were produced through the medium of large firms of printsellers for a variety of commercial purposes, and usurped to a large extent what had hitherto been the province of woodcuts. Book illustrations, broadsides, devotional prints, maps and topographical prints form the bulk of the engravings of this period, and inevitably the art was debased to a mere commercial convenience, a position from which it is only now beginning to recover fully.

The principal activity was concentrated in the Netherlands, where the great publishing business of Hieronymous Cock, at Antwerp, exercised an enormous influence. Cock was largely responsible for the fatal introduction of Italian ideals

into Flemish art, but he also recognised the Northern genius as shown in the etchings of Brueghel the Elder. Cock's assistant, Cornelis Cort, established himself in Rome about 1571, and founded there a school of engraving whose best known exponents are Agostino Caracci and Hendrik Goltzius. The latter's "Standard-bearer" is a triumph of its type, with the swinging pose of the figure against the buoyant folds of the flag, but it also illustrates the tendency to emphasise tone effects which in the end were bound to prove disastrous to the line-engraver. The brothers Jan, Hieronymus and Anton Wierix of Antwerp worked mainly in the old Northern tradition, and produced vast quantities of religious prints to be used by the Jesuits for the purposes of counter-Reformation propaganda. The work of the three is practically indistinguishable, and Dürer is the chief influence on their style. In very many instances their compositions were original, but they also reproduced Patinir, Mabuse, and De Vos, in both sacred and secular subjects. Both from the technical and from the artistic point of view their portraits are their best work. Another family of engravers in the Netherlands was founded by Crispin de Passe, who died in 1637. He worked mainly in the manner of the Wierix family, and his children, Crispin II, Simon, Willem and Madeleine followed their father. There was also a Crispin III. The work of

any one member of the family is practically identical in manner with that of all the others, and all reach a very high average level of excellence. Simon and Willem worked in England, where they exercised a great influence in the early development of the English school of engraving.

The relationship between Raphael and Marcantonio foreshadowed a development of the function of engraving of which the greatest possible use was made by Peter Paul Rubens. He had in his employment, often working in his own studio, a number of engravers whose duty it was to reproduce his pictures as soon as they were finished. He himself closely supervised their work, and proofs still exist with his corrections. His reputation easily won for him the services of the best craftsmen of the time, and he was able to train them in his own style without altogether depriving them of that original impulse without which their reproductions would have been mere dead copies. Cornelis Galle and Willem Swanenburg were prominent among the earliest of those who worked for Rubens, but their style was already formed before they came to him. Pieter Soutman, of Haarlem, was the first who was actually trained by the painter, but he was quite outclassed by another pupil, Lucas Vorsterman. Vorsterman's work for Rubens was of the highest excellence, but in 1622, when he was only about 27, the connection seems to have come

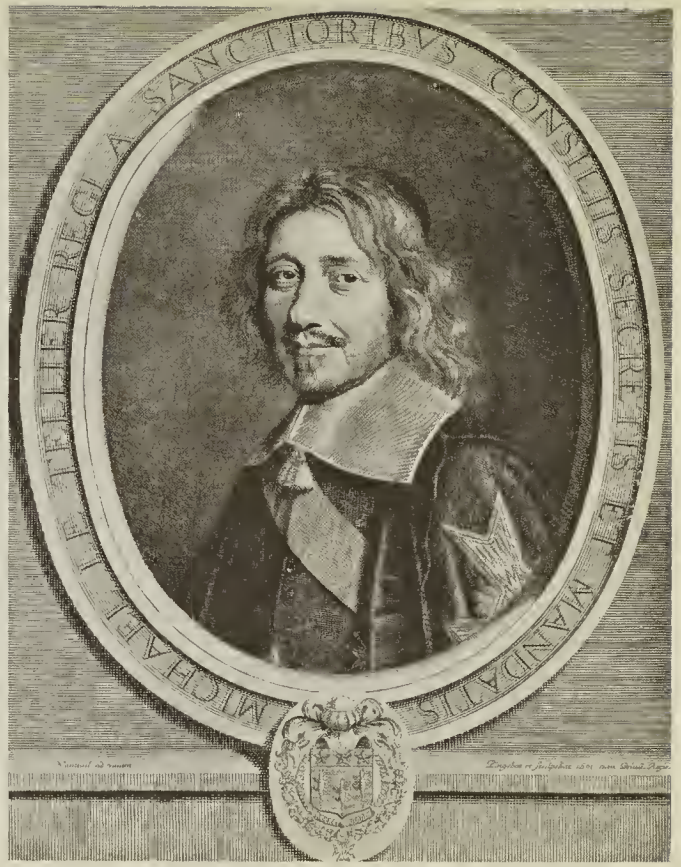
to an end. Afterwards, like Hollar, he worked in England for the Earl of Arundel, but without the direction of a greater mind his work lost most of its brilliance, and he did not recover himself until he took to engraving for Van Dyck. His place as Rubens' principal engraver was taken by Paul Pontius, a pupil of Vorsterman, and an even better engraver than his master. Among others who did fine work for Rubens, though not actually trained by him, were the brothers Boëtius and Schelte a Bolswert, who came to Antwerp about 1620. and Pieter de Jode. Portraits by all of these engravers can readily be found by the collector at a moderate price.

Van Dyck followed the example of his master Rubens in closely supervising the engravings done after his work. For the famous "Iconography," a collection of portraits of celebrities, he actually etched eighteen plates, to be completed afterwards with the burin, but for the remaining plates he made sketches in chalk or grisaille. The number of plates varies considerably in the different editions. Among the engravers who carried out the designs were Vorsterman, Paul Pontius, the Bolswerts, and Pieter de Jode. Though the engraved plates are of much the same nature and value as those after Rubens, the importance of the "Iconography" consists largely in Van Dyck's own etchings, to which reference will be made later.

No great original engraver appeared subsequently in the Netherlands, but the achievements of the native school of painting gave constant employment to a host of skilled craftsmen, who, following the lines traced out by Rubens and Van Dyck for their engravers, successfully interpreted the works of Frans Hals, Ostade, Brouwer, etc. None of them deserves individual mention, except perhaps Suyderhoef, the engraver of Frans Hals.

The supremacy in achievement, which had for so long rested with Germany or the Netherlands, now, for the first time, passes to France. The beginning of the seventeenth century saw the rise of the great school of French portrait engraving and the earliest developments of the technical facility which for two centuries placed the French engravers above those of any other nation, and which culminated in the dazzling perfection of the prints of the late eighteenth century. The first of the great names is that of Claude Mellan (1598-1688), although the extreme virtuosity of his style rendered impossible the exercise of the influence which his merits deserved. Cross-hatching is entirely absent, and the shading is effected by varying the thickness of the sweeping parallel lines, and to such an extent does he occasionally carry this method that in the "Napkin of St. Veronica" of 1649 the face of Christ is worked in one continuous spiral, starting from the tip of the nose, the shading being gained by

William Faithorne
Sir William Sanderson
Line Engraving



Robert Nanteuil
Michel le Tellier
Line Engraving

the thickening or reducing of the line. But his less mannered work in portraiture is sound and effective and very often he engraved from his own designs. His own portrait is a good example of his clean and direct workmanship. However, his importance in the development of this branch of art is small compared with that of his contemporary, Jean Morin. Morin was a pupil of the painter, Philippe de Champaigne, and thirty-two of his fifty engraved portraits are after his master's canvases. Several others are after Van Dyck. His method was a combination of etching and engraving, and the modelling of the face was attained, as in the Van Dyck etchings, by a system of dots, which made possible the rendering of very subtle gradations of tone. Among his finest plates are those of "Cardinal Bentivoglio," after Van Dyck, and of "Cardinal de Retz" and "Omar Talon," both after Philippe de Champaigne. Nearly all the portraits are bust length, and set in a simple moulded octagonal frame. But the French portrait school owes its real glory to Robert Nanteuil, portrait engraver to Louis XIV. Almost all his prints were engraved from his own drawings done from the life, and show a grasp of the personality of the sitter, and a sincerity in interpretation, which set them among the masterpieces of portraiture in any medium. He never attempted anything but heads, and concentrated all his skill upon the expression of character, to which he subordinated all the details

of the composition, treating the often elaborate costumes with restraint, and posing the sitter against a perfectly plain dark background. The portrait is almost always enclosed in a plain oval, set in a moulded plinth and inscribed with the title in Latin or French. His early work shows the influence of Mellan, but he also closely studied Morin, and about 1665 (the date of his birth is uncertain) he had evolved his own individual technique. In this he attains by pure engraving the richness of effect which Morin produced with etching, and the different textures of silk and satin, linen and lace are admirably rendered. Nanteuil's position as engraver to the King brought him all the notabilities of the Court as clients, and in his plates are revealed the souls of the men who moulded that brilliant period—the King himself, Cardinal Mazarin, Nicolas Fouquet, César d'Estrées, Jean-Baptiste Colbert and a host of others. Among so much that is superlative it is difficult to pick out the best, but perhaps the "César d'Estrées" and the "Nicolas Fouquet" are the most striking in design and characterisation. Very much under the influence of Nanteuil is Gerard Edelinck, a pupil of Cornelis Galle. His work almost rivals that of Nanteuil in brilliance of technique, but he seldom worked from his own drawings, reproducing for the most part Charles Le Brun, Philippe de Champaigne and Hyacinthe Rigaud. His "John Dryden," after Kneller, is generally considered his finest plate. The third

great master of the period is Antoine Masson, who, with a very much smaller output, occasionally equals Nanteuil, as in the "Pierre Dupuis" or the "Guillaume de Brisacier," both after Mignard.

Towards the close of the seventeenth century comes Pierre Drevet, born in 1663, and his son, Pierre Imbert, born in 1697. Their virtuosity is amazing, but they followed the painters of their day in a too great insistence upon decorative adjuncts. The figures, generally full length, are posed against a most elaborate background, and the eye, fascinated by the wonderful rendering of the luxuriant and restless fabrics, is apt to miss altogether the face of the sitter. The famous portrait of "Bishop Bossuet," 1723, by Pierre Imbert Drevet, after Hyacinthe Rigaud, is an excellent example of their style. Equally well known is the portrait of "Adrienne Lecouvreur," 1730.

So far nothing has been said with regard to the place taken by England in the growth and development of line-engraving, for the first purely English artist who appears is William Rogers, goldsmith and engraver, working at the very end of the sixteenth century. For about fifty years previous to this date there had been a certain amount of engraving done in England by artists migrating from the Netherlands, and a lead had been given to native talent by such men as Thomas Geminus, Franz Hogenberg, Theodor de Bry and Jodocus Hondius. But in spite of the perfection of the work produced on the continent, the first

English engraver displays a complete lack of any power of pictorial composition. His portraits of Queen Elizabeth, important as they are from many points of view, are simply the designs of a goldsmith, with much attention paid to the details of the ornaments of dress and ruff, and some very improbable ships and mountains in the background. At the beginning of the seventeenth century there arose a gradually increasing demand for engraved maps, portraits and title-pages, and the demand was supplied by such men as Renold Elstrack, a Fleming settled in England, and Simon and Willem van de Passe. Among the mass of work produced for the publishers at this period, there is little or nothing of any artistic interest, except for an occasional portrait by George Glover. His "Sir Edward Dering," after Cornelis Janssen, reaches a high level, but the first of the English engravers who can really compete with his continental contemporaries is William Faithorne, who began to practise the art of portrait engraving about 1640. Faithorne's early style was closely founded on that of Mellan, and can almost challenge comparison with it, but he did not find his true manner until after his visit to Paris about 1650. There he became acquainted with the work of Nanteuil, but he seems to have developed independently upon similar lines rather than to have been directly influenced by the French artist. At his best he is quite the equal of Nanteuil in characterisation and force, and scarcely behind in

subtlety, but he was always compelled to produce a great deal of pot-boiling work, which has not enhanced his reputation. He must be judged on the finest examples of his work, on the "Sir William Sanderson" of 1658, "Sir William Paston," 1659, the several plates of "Charles II" and "Barbara, Lady Castlemaine," 1666.

David Loggan, who was born in Danzig in 1635 and came to England in 1653, had a very successful career as a fashionable portraitist, although none of his plates are more than pleasingly mediocre, with the exception of "Sir Thomas Isham." His reputation now rests mainly on his architectural engravings of Oxford and Cambridge, the "Oxonia Illustrata" of 1675, and the "Cantabrigia Illustrata" of 1690. The prints are charming birds-eye views of the various colleges, with their gay gardens peopled by busy figures, and are executed with a wealth of the most minute detail. Some of his best work in portraiture was done, not in engraving, but in plumbago (from which is derived our lead pencil) on vellum. His best pupil, Robert White, also produced some fine work in this medium, but the majority of his extremely numerous engraved portraits are very second-rate, though invaluable for the iconography of a fascinating period.

Towards the close of the seventeenth century the art of pure line-engraving in England began to be eclipsed by the overwhelming popularity

of the newly discovered method of mezzotint. Engravers were forced to work in the new medium, and the traditions of the more ancient craft were carried on only by the competent but uninspired antiquarian, George Vertue, who produced an immense number of portraits and archæological engravings. Apart from his activities, no line-engravings at all were done until William Hogarth (1677-1764) to some extent revived the fashion. Hogarth was the originator of the satirical caricature, which has always found a ready home in England and is almost confined to that country; and the immense popularity of his prints was due far more to their subjects than to their intrinsic technical value, for the work, a mixture of etching and engraving, is coarse and poor in quality, and the draughtsmanship is uncertain. But his imagination is vivid, and his wit is biting, and he has a great command of dramatic situations. His first engravings were the prints of the "South Sea Bubble," published in 1721, and were followed up by the "Masquerades and Operas" of 1724, the "Harlot's Progress," 1733, the "Rake's Progress" and the "Industry and Idleness," 1747. The best known of his series, the six plates of the "Marriage à la Mode," 1747, were engraved by S. F. Ravenet, G. Scotin and B. Baron, while Luke Sullivan was responsible for the "March to Finchley." Of Hogarth's single plates the most important are "Southwark Fair," 1723, and the "Roast Beef of Old Eng-

Sir R. Strange, after Van Dyck

Charles I

Line Engraving

land, or Calais Gate," 1749. He had no direct followers, for his successors in caricature, Thomas Rowlandson and James Gillray, were quite individual both in subject and technique. They will be dealt with in the chapter on etching.

The revival of line engraving in the traditional manner was due to Sir Robert Strange (b. 1721), but the renaissance was not in any sense a general one, and the eighteenth century shows only two other engravers of importance, William Sharp and William Woollett. Strange had joined the Jacobites in his native land of Scotland, and in the collapse of their cause had fled to Paris. There he studied under Lebas, and when he returned to England about 1751 his style was fully developed. He always worked on a foundation of etching, reworking the lines afterwards with the graver, and attained by this method a soft and delicate manner which was well adapted to his favourite work of reproducing the Italian painters. In 1760 he went to Italy for a few years, and had there something of a triumphal progress. His best work, however, or at least that which nowadays makes the strongest appeal, lies in his portraits, of which "Charles I" and "Henrietta Maria," both after Van Dyck, are perhaps the best known. William Sharp's method of engraving was similar to that of Strange, and his portraits in particular are marvellous examples of the reproductive art. His masterpieces are "Dr. John Hunter" after Reynolds, and the "Doctors

of the Church" after Guido Reni. William Woollett specialised almost entirely in landscape engravings, devoting himself especially to the pictures of Claude Lorrain. His plates are sound and conscientious, but painfully dull, although his very free use of the mixed method of etching and engraving made his technique extremely flexible. He reproduced many of the works of Richard Wilson, George Smith of Chichester, and other artists of the English landscape school, but his most famous plates are two battle-pieces, "The Death of General Wolfe" and "The Battle of La Hogue," both after Benjamin West. Among the landscape engravers who aided the progress of the art towards that state of decadence in which Turner found it, may be mentioned J. B. C. Chatelain, Thomas Major and James Peake.

A certain amount of mystery is attached to a print engraved by Pierre Lombart, which shows a rider on horseback, sometimes with the head of Charles I and sometimes with that of Cromwell. Mr. G. Somes Layard, shortly before his death, published a book entitled "The Headless Horseman" (1922), dealing with the history of this print and solving a difficult and mysterious problem. The print is unique in the headless state, which is in the British Museum, and was executed by Pierre Lombart, a foreigner who worked in England from 1648 to 1662. Other states of the print exist, though they are very rare, showing the rider with first one head and then another attached to his

shoulders—Charles I, two variations of Cromwell, Louis XIV and Gustavus Adolphus. The horse and rider are taken from Van Dyck's picture at Windsor of "Charles I under an Archway," and in its first state the face depicted was that of Cromwell. When the Protector died and public opinion swung back towards the Stuarts, Lombart, in panic, burnished out the head and his own signature, and threw the plate aside. Some years later he decided to try to make something of it, and lightly etched in the features of Louis XIV of France. The proof in the Bodleian Library at Oxford has the head of Gustavus Adolphus drawn over this in red chalk. Lombart now returned to France, selling the plate before he left, and its next state displays once again the face of Cromwell, drawn of course by another hand. On its next appearance the whole plate has been worked over, and the head of Charles I substituted for that of Cromwell, while in its seventh and last state, an older and weaker edition of Cromwell has finally won the day. It is still possible, of course, that some day yet another state will turn up somewhere to upset this order of events, although it is most unlikely that chance will afford the average collector an opportunity of adding to the tale.

The "Headless Horseman" is the best known of the so-called "palimpsest" plates, the word being adopted from the term employed for a parchment manuscript where the original writing has been

erased or rubbed out to make room for a later writing. Applied to prints the term is used for a plate where a complete alteration—one head for another, one costume for another—far beyond the ordinary "state" alterations, has been deliberately made. Mr. Somes Layard described many such plates in connection with the large collection made by the Marquess of Sligo. A vast quantity of information, often about the most obscure British portraits, will be found in his posthumous work, fully illustrated, "A Catalogue Raisonné of Engraved British Portraits from altered plates" (1927).

Turning back to France, we find that an entirely fresh inspiration had been given to engraving by the delightful pictures of Watteau, and further encouragement in this new direction was provided by the almost equally fascinating works of Boucher, Lancret, Pater and Fragonard. Their light and delicate grace, which sums up for us all that is most attractive in eighteenth-century France, commanded the skill of a multitude of engravers, whose technical facility surpassed all previous achievements in their medium. They all worked in a mixture of etching and engraving, laying the lines first with the needle, biting them lightly with acid, and reworking them with the graver, and by this means succeeded in combining the freedom and flexibility of etching with the sparkling and finished aspect of engraving. But they all worked in the same convention, and among

the best of them there was nothing to choose in the matter of skill, so that it is almost impossible even for an expert to assign these prints to their respective engravers on the grounds of style alone. The consideration of this period, therefore, must deal in the first place with the prints themselves and with the draughtsmen, and only secondarily with the engravers.

The engravers of Watteau did not constitute a school in the strict sense of the word, as did the engravers of Rubens. They are held together only by their similarity of subject, and by the common tradition which they inherited from Gérard Audran. Audran's pupils, Benoit Audran and Nicolas Henry Tardieu, were the most important engravers in a group whose members showed more individuality than did the engravers of the later part of the century. Tardieu was the most successful of them all in capturing the spirit of his original, and his "Les Champs Elysées" and "L'Embarquement pour Cythère" reproduce all of Watteau's airy grace. But the "Fêtes Vénitiennes" of Laurent Cars runs them very close, and it is impossible to make invidious distinctions between such plates as "Le Concert Champêtre," by Benoit Audran, "L'Amour au Théâtre Française," by C. N. Cochin, "Les Agréements de l'Été," by F. Joullain, and "Les Charmes de la Vie," by P. Aveline. François Boucher himself, in his younger days, engraved a number of Watteau's designs, especially the

little decorative panels, while the famous engraver, Lebas, reproduced "L'Ile Enchantée" and "L'Assemblée Galante." Greuze found his chief interpreter in J. J. Flipart, and Lancret in N. de Larmessin. Prints after Lancret are not very popular, but the series of "Les Quatre Saisons," engraved by Audran, Scotin, Tardieu and Lebas have always commanded a good price.

At the same time a favourable reception was accorded to engravings after the Dutch and Flemish painters of the seventeenth century. Lebas was particularly successful in his work after Wouwermans, and he also reproduced a series of "Fêtes Flamandes," after Teniers. The somewhat analogous genius of J. B. S. Chardin was also recognised by the engravers in such prints as "Le Négligé, ou la Toilette du Matin," by Lebas, "La Serinette," by Laurent Cars, and "La Fontaine," by C. N. Cochin.

Two engravers of the period who stand out as personalities are Georg Friedrich Schmidt and Jean Georges Wille. They both attempted to return to the method of pure engraving, unmixed with etching, but their manner of laying perfectly regular sets of lines produced a hard and monotonous effect which mars their best work. Schmidt was slightly the elder of the two, and by far the better engraver. He went to Paris from Berlin in 1736, and became a pupil of N. de Larmessin. Under his master's guidance he produced several

plates after Lancret, but his real talent lay in portraiture. He began to reproduce the pictures of Rigaud, and scored an immediate success with the portrait of "Henry Louis de la Tour d'Auvergne" in 1739, followed up in 1744 by his masterpiece, "Pierre Mignard," which recalled the achievements of Nanteuil. Almost immediately after this he was invited to take up a Court appointment in Berlin, and in his native city he devoted himself mainly to the reproduction of Antoine Pesne. After 1757 he abandoned engraving altogether in favour of etching, for the most part copying Rembrandt. Wille, as the master of nearly all the engravers of the later eighteenth century, exercised an enormous and not very salutary influence. The formal method, which only a genuine artistic impulse had kept from ruining Schmidt's style, was in his work revealed in all its painful bareness. That, like Strange in England, he was a sound engraver from the technical point of view cannot be disputed, but there is little in his heavy and laboured plates to attract the attention of the collector. But in his own day he was extremely successful. It is said, indeed, that his growing popularity determined Schmidt's return to Berlin. Wille began engraving portraits, but later turned to what he called "historical engraving." "La Liseuse" after Gerard Dou had a great success, and he followed it up with such plates as "L'Instruction Paternelle," after

Terborch, and "La Cuisinière Hollandaise" after Metzu.

Wille's ponderous influence had a depressing effect on French engraving, but its spirits more than revived a little later in the famous prints known generally as "Estampes Galantes." Their technique is marvellous; their subjects would often be considered distinctly on the border line were it not for the purity of the draughtsmanship, the exquisite grace and delicacy of the execution, and, above all, for the open and sincere frankness which springs from the genuine unconsciousness of the need for reticence. The "Estampes Galantes" have many affectations, but an assumed modesty is not one of them. They belong essentially to the boudoir and the salon, and constitute an incomparable series of illustrations of the private life of the period; the details of the toilette, the gay flirtations, the promenades in beautiful gardens, the preparations for the ball. The engravers of the "Estampes Galantes" are very numerous, and of almost equal skill, but the best is perhaps Nicolas de Launay. Fragonard is responsible for the design of one of the most famous prints, "Les Hasards Heureux de l'Escarpolette," which, in a genuine impression, always has a crease down the middle where the paper was folded. Other charming Fragonard prints are "Le Verrou" and "La Fuite à Dessein." Possibly the most popular of the "Estampes Galantes" are those after Baudouin and Lavreince.

R. de Launay, after Moreau le Jeune

Les Adieux

Line Engraving

Lavreince, by birth a Swede, settled in Paris, and became a prolific designer of these dainty subjects, and among his most valuable prints are "Les Offres Séduisantes" engraved by Deni and Delignon, "La Soubrette Confidente" and "La Marchande à la Toilette," both by Vidal. Very interesting are "L'Assemblée au Concert" and "L'Assemblée au Salon," which between them sum up the costume, architecture and *décor* of the period. Both are engraved by Dequevauviller, and are supposed to represent rooms in the houses of the Duc de Luynes and the Prince de Conti. "L'Heureux Moment" and "Le Roman dangereux," both by N. de Launay, show in detail the luxurious accessories of the boudoir of a *grande dame*, while two of Lavreince's designs, "Le Billet Doux" and "Qu'en dit l'Abbé?" have always been regarded as two of the masterpieces of their kind. Baudouin is the most sprightly interpreter of the gay licence of the French eighteenth century, and his best engraver is Nicholas Ponce. Ponce's masterpiece is "L'Enlèvement Nocturne," and "La Toilette" and "Marton ou la jeune Bouquetière" are dainty and desirable plates. Baudouin has the honour of the responsibility for perhaps the most famous of all these prints, "Le Coucher de la Mariée," of which it has been said that it is "rightly considered one of the glories of the French eighteenth century school." The preliminary etching for it was done by J. B. Moreau, and the

engraving by J. B. Simonet, who also engraved "Le Modéle Honnête," "La Soirée des Thuileries," and "Le Danger de Tête-à-tête." N. de Launay engraved "Le Carquois Epuisé," and P. P. Choffard, who specialised in vignettes and culs-de-lampe wreathed round with roses and cupids, displayed equal skill on a larger scale in "Marchez tout doux, parlez tout bas." Another delightful artist is Augustin de St. Aubin, who often engraved his own designs as well as those of other men. He was a pupil of Laurent Cars, and two of his plates, "Le Concert" and "Le Bal Paré," both engraved by A. J. Duclos, are among the most popular of the "Estampes Galantes," while two of the most charming prints in the world are the portraits of himself and his wife in "Au moins soyez discret" and "Comptez sur mes serments."

Jean Michel Moreau, usually known as Moreau le Jeune, has won a special place for himself among artists of this period for his famous "Monument de Costume." It was originally intended to be merely a series of fashion-plates for the dressmakers, but Sigismund Freudeberg, to whom it was entrusted, preferred to avoid the monotony inseparable from such a conception by stringing together his designs to illustrate the daily round of a young mondaine. The first series, consisting of twelve plates, was issued in 1774-75. Moreau le Jeune completed the work in two more series, between 1775 and 1783, and the whole was pub-

lished under the title, "Suite d'Estampes pour servir à l'Histoire des Mœurs et des Costumes des Français dans le dix-huitième siècle." Moreau's work is so infinitely superior to that of Freudeberg that the whole production is usually thought of as his. His first set of plates, which formed the second series of the whole work, shows incidents in the life of a young married woman in Court society, and includes some of the masterpieces of the period. The finest plate is usually considered to be "La Sortie de l'Opéra," engraved by G. Malbeste, but "Les Adieux," by R. de Launay, is a serious rival. Other favourites are "Le Souper Fin," by J. S. Helman, and "Le Rendezvous pour Marly," by Carl Guttenberg, while four of the plates are rendered especially charming by the simple human feeling which animates them—"Declaration de la Grossesse," by P. A. Martini, "N'ayez pas peur, ma bonne amie," by J. S. Helman, "C'est un fils, Monsieur," by J. C. Baquoy and "Les Délices de la Maternité," by J. S. Helman. The third series illustrates the life and costume of a young man-about-town, but is of course intrinsically less interesting. Moreau held for five years the position of "Dessinateur des menus plaisirs du Roi," which gave him the opportunity of producing the "Serment de Louis XVI à son Sacre," which he engraved himself, and which contained over 500 figures. Two very interesting plates from the point of view of military ceremonial are "La Revue de

la Maison du Roi au Trou d'Enfer" and "Vue de la Plaine des Sablons." Like so many of his contemporaries, Moreau was very successful until the Revolution, but afterwards, when his special type of subject no longer appealed, he was crushed by the classical influence of David, and became merely a second-rate illustrator.

The illustrated books of the period do not really come within the scope of this work, but very often their plates are found detached from their context, and therefore a word may be said about the principal illustrators. One of the earliest was Claude Gillot, the master of Watteau, who etched from his own designs the illustrations to the "Fables" of Houdart de la Motte, published in 1719. Four folio volumes of the "Fables" of La Fontaine appeared in 1755–59, with engravings from designs by Jean Baptiste Oudry. Hubert François Gravelot was one of the most prolific illustrators, and had a very great influence on illustration in England. He lived in London for a considerable period and produced a great number of trade-cards, bill-heads and illustrations. Among the books he illustrated were Gay's "Fables," Richardson's "Pamela," Theobald's edition of Shakespeare, 1740, Fielding's "Tom Jones," and Dryden's "Dramatic Works," 1735. These all have a very English appearance, but some of his best work, such as the illustrations of the "Contes Moraux," of J. F. Marmontel, 1765, are purely French in sentiment.

N. Ponce, after P. A. Baudoin
La Toilette
Line Engraving

Charles Eisen was another prolific illustrator, whose best work is contained in the "Contes" of la Fontaine and the "Baisers" of C. J. Dorat. C. N. Cochin, the younger, also did many illustrations, and P. P. Choffard made a speciality of head and tail-pieces. Moreau le Jeune's illustrations comprise some of his best work, as in the twelve volumes of J. J. Rousseau's "Œuvres Complètes," 1774–83.

English book illustration in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries did not reach the level of the corresponding French school. There is a very great deal of second-rate reproductive engraving belonging to this period, but the only artist of real merit was Thomas Stothard (1755–1834).

In line-engraving, as in wood-engraving, William Blake's achievement stands out, isolated and remote from the current stream of contemporary art. In the days of his apprenticeship to James Basire he learned the business of reproductive engraving, and throughout his life he was forced to produce a good deal of this sort of work, his original plates appearing at long intervals. As a reproductive engraver he was as competent as any of his contemporaries, but his original work, in line-engraving, water-colour and coloured prints, gives him a secure place among the great imaginative artists of the world. His work is appreciated now almost for the first time, but can never be popular, for the true mystic, to

whom the world invisible is the only reality, is always set apart from other men. Even those to whom his poetry seems the expression of their own vague gropings, will find his drawings strange, for the concrete realisation of the unseen must always be an intensely personal matter. His designs, at their best, are superb in composition, but often the anatomy is faulty, and the heavily muscled nude forms in writhing positions often verge on the grotesque. Some of his best work is in line-engraving, as in the "Illustrations to the Book of Job," 1825, but for many of his own works he devised a method of etching in relief both text and design, and tinting the design with water-colour. In this manner he produced the "Songs of Innocence and Experience," in 1789, the "Book of Thel," 1789, the "Vision of the Daughters of Albion," 1793, "America, a Prophecy," 1793, and "Europe, a Prophecy," 1793. In "Milton, a Poem," 1804, and "Jerusalem," 1804, the colouring is absent. In 1797 he engraved forty-three illustrations to Young's "Night Thoughts," and in 1808 designed twelve plates for Blair's "Grave," which were etched by Schiavonetti. At the time of his death he was working on illustrations to Dante, but only seven plates were completed. He often made use of the white line on a black ground, like Bewick in his woodcuts, and "Albion Adoring Christ on the Cross" (from "Jerusalem") is a fine example of the effect obtained. In his

best work, the sweep of the design is marvellous, all wind and fire, as in "Pity" (from "Macbeth"), the "Ancient of Days," from "Europe," "The Elohim creating Adam," "Satan exulting over Eve," "The Lord answering Job out of the Whirlwind," although personal predilection probably plays a larger part in estimating the merit of Blake's designs than those of any other artist.

Under the inspiration of Turner (1775–1851) English engraving took over a new lease of life by turning to landscape, and for the first time struck out an entirely new line for itself. The method used was "mixed," for almost all the work was done in etching, usually on a steel plate, with the gradations of tone achieved by many bitings, and the graver was only used to give a final sparkle. Owing, perhaps, to the use of steel the general effect is much closer to engraving than to etching. Turner supervised closely the work of his engravers, repeatedly correcting the proofs, and succeeded, as Rubens had done, in training a band of craftsmen who could interpret exactly the spirit of his drawings. The plates were usually issued in series, with a running commentary, for it was the age of illustrated books for the drawing-room. The earliest were the "Copper-Plate Magazine," 1794–98, and the "Oxford Almanacks," 1799–1811, engraved by James Basire, and then came the "Views of Sussex," 1819, engraved by W. B. Cooke, the

"Picturesque Tour of Italy," 1820, engraved by various hands, the "Rivers of France," 1837, and the "Picturesque Views in England and Wales," 1838. Among the engravers were R. Brandard, W. Miller, R. Wallis, J. B. Allen and E. Goodall. Turner's "Liber Studiorum" will be dealt with in the chapter on Mezzotint.

CHAPTER IV

ETCHING TO 1850

JUST as the process of line engraving developed from the technical methods of the goldsmiths, so the practice of etching originated in the art of the armourers. It is not known precisely when etched decoration was first used for the adornment of sword-blades, helmets, cuirasses, etc., but it was in common use in the early part of the fifteenth century, and was probably known long before that. The first etched prints are later in date than the first engravings, for the earliest dated etching belongs to 1513, and the great period in etching was the seventeenth century. The essential difference between etching and engraving lies in the quality of the line produced by the two methods. In engraving, the burin is held firmly against the palm of the hand and pushed with the action of a plough, as it were, across the surface of the copper, and this action in itself controls the line, making it even and regular. In etching, the needle is held like a pencil, and works over the prepared "ground," which is laid on the copper, even more easily and smoothly than a pencil on

paper. When the plate is bitten the acid tends to break the edges and make little irregularities in the lines, which thus have a far less clean-cut appearance than the lines made with the burin. While the burin is held very firmly, the etching needle is held quite loosely and almost upright. It allows for much more "nervousness" of line, and if etchings by Whistler or Haden are examined with a magnifying glass, it will be seen that there is a tremble in every line.

The method of etching is rather complicated. The polished copper plate is first cleaned thoroughly and then heated. The etching-ground, composed of a mixture of beeswax, asphaltum and Burgundy pitch, is applied to the plate and, as it melts, is spread on smoothly by means of a round pad, called the "dabber." The plate is then blackened evenly in the smoke of a bundle of tapers in order that the lines made by the needle may be clearly visible, and the back of the plate is painted over with a varnish which will resist acid. The etching-needle, which is either a sharpened bar of steel or a fine steel point set into a handle, removes the ground and lays bare the surface of the copper in its path. When the design is completed the plate is immersed in a bath of diluted acid, usually nitric acid, though sometimes hydrochloric is used, and, the ground being impervious to acid, the mordant bites into the copper where the needle has left it bare. If some of the lines require to be bitten more lightly than others, the plate is

taken out, and the lines painted over with a "stopping-out" varnish. This "stopping-out" may be frequently repeated in the course of biting a plate, and many gradations of tone are obtained in this manner. When the biting is finished, the ground is cleaned off with turpentine, and the plate is printed in the same manner as an engraved plate. If the first proof shows that further work on the plate is desirable, a fresh ground is put on, and more lines are added. If the lines have been bitten too much, they can be made narrower by burnishing the edges together. If a complete alteration of part of the plate is necessary, the faulty work is scraped away, the hollow thus made beaten up from the back, and this part of the plate repolished. Every alteration made by methods of this kind produces a new "state" of the etching.

Another variety of etching, which is not often used, is known as "soft-ground." The ground is made by mixing ordinary ground with half its weight of tallow, and is laid on the plate in the usual manner. Then a piece of thin paper is stretched over the plate, and the design is drawn on the paper with a pencil. Where the pencil point has travelled, the paper sticks to the ground, and when the paper is lifted off, part of the ground comes with it, leaving the lines marked on the ground with a grain corresponding to the grain of the paper, and thus similar to the marks of the pencil on the paper. The biting is done in the

same manner as with an ordinary etching, and the effect produced is almost identical with that of a pencil drawing.

The method known as " dry-point " is always considered an etching process, but is in fact much more closely akin to engraving. No ground is laid and there is no biting, but the lines are drawn much more freely than is possible in engraving. The dry-point needle, which is merely a heavy etching-needle sharpened to a rather more obtuse angle, is scored into the plate, and forces up the metal into a narrow ridge on either side of the furrow. This ridge is called the " burr," and it holds a great deal of the printing ink, so that the line prints with a very full and soft tone, which constitutes the chief charm of dry-point work. The burr wears off quickly in the printing, and a dry-point plate cannot give many fine impressions. When dry-point is used to give fine finishing touches to an etching or engraving, the burr is often scraped away.

Comparatively little etching was done in the sixteenth century. The earliest dated plate is the " Girl Bathing her Feet " by Urs Graf, 1513, of which only one impression is known. Dürer was the pioneer in etching, and executed six plates between 1515 and 1518, two of which, the " Agony in the Garden " and the " Cannon," are equal to his best work in engraving and wood-cutting. He was, however, only experimenting with the process, and the other plates, the " Man

Rembrandt van Ryn

Christ Preaching

Etching

of Sorrows," the " Angel displaying the Sudarium," the " Pluto and Proserpine " and the " Man in Despair," are not very successful. All these etchings are done on iron, which bites less regularly than copper, and consequently produces a rather rough effect. In the two best plates this characteristic is utilised to emphasise the effect of the composition, but Dürer evidently did not regard the process as altogether satisfactory. Of his three dry-points, the lovely " St. Jerome in the Wilderness " has already been mentioned, and the " Man of Sorrows " and the " Holy Family " are comparative failures. Hans Sebald Beham etched occasionally, as also did Albrecht Altdorfer, displaying in this process the same characteristics which made his woodcuts and engravings so distinctive. Augustin Hirschvogel, who worked as an engineer, medallist and painter of glass and porcelain at Nuremberg, etched very much in Altdorfer's manner, and even more lightly and suggestively, while Hans Sebald Lautensack adopted the same convention for the rendering of landscape with a less sure instinct, which permitted him to mar his plates by a rather too heavy touch, and a too great insistence on detail. Altdorfer and Hirschvogel at their best produced some of the most delightful landscape etchings in the world. Their plates are drawn in a very open manner, and there is no gradation in the biting of the lines. This device seems first to have been used by Callot.

It is possible that the family of Hopfers of Augsburg preceded both Dürer and Urs Graf in the use of etching. The three brothers, Daniel, Hieronymus and Lambert, produced large numbers of etchings adapted from Italian, German and Flemish sources, and etched roughly but vigorously on iron. They display no originality or real artistic feeling, but Daniel Hopfer's best print, the portrait of "Konrad von der Rosen," which appears to be an original design, is a work of real merit, and seems, on external evidence, to date about 1503–4.

The second half of the sixteenth century produced very little etching in Germany, and none of it is of much importance. Jost Amman executed a great deal of commercial work of some merit and a few interesting portraits. Mathias Zundt did some very fine ornament designs, including a series of patterns for jewellers, published in 1551, which are among the masterpieces of German decorative art.

The Netherlands, again, show little of interest in this century. Lucas van Leyden etched a few plates on copper, in the period when he was under the influence of Dürer, notably the portrait of Maximilian I., where the face is engraved and the rest of the plate is etched. Dirick Vellert, a designer of stained glass in Antwerp, did a few plates in a combination of etching and engraving which he may have learnt from Lucas van Leyden. He is derivative in inspiration, but his essentially

Flemish manner has a charm of its own. Pieter Brueghel, the elder, and Jan Brueghel, the elder, etched a few plates which show in a lesser degree the same quality as their paintings.

In Italy, the first attempts in etching were made by Parmegiano and Andrea Schiavone. Parmegiano's delicate work is similar in method to his pen drawings, and has all their charm, but none of the essential quality of etching. Schiavone used dry-point in many of his plates, but his drawing is uncertain, and the potentialities of his medium are not fully realised. The influence of Titian inspired the production of many plates in the master's manner by various artists of the Venetian School, but at best they are only weak adaptations, although they show a remarkable breadth of handling.

In the seventeenth century etching suddenly springs to life throughout Europe as the fully developed rival of engraving. The promise shown in Italy, however, did not bear fruit, despite the often brilliant work of José de Ribera ("Lo Spagnoletto") and of Salvator Rosa; and the supremacy in this, as in the kindred graphic arts of wood-engraving and line engraving, again lies with the North. Jacques Callot, who was born at Nancy in 1592, is the first real etcher. He studied in Rome and Florence until 1621, and then settled in Nancy, where he died in 1635. His very numerous plates are nearly all small in size, conceived in a spirit varying between the satirical

and the grotesque and crowded with figures whose movements and sometimes violent actions are rendered with consummate skill and observation. His profoundly original genius found its happiest expression in his drawings of the beggars, vagabonds and common soldiers, among whom he spent much of his youth, and whom he depicted with a sympathy and certainty which foreshadows Rembrandt. The two series of the "Miseries of War" are the best known of his works, and show his power of knitting crowds of tumultuous figures into a satisfactory composition, and the "Temptation of St. Anthony" is a masterpiece of grotesque imagination. He also produced a large number of topographical prints, which are among the best of their kind. It has already been mentioned that he was the first to understand the possibilities of biting the lines in various depths to give gradation of tone.

It is generally agreed that it was a meeting between Callot and Claude Gellée (Lorrain) at Nancy, in 1627, which induced the latter to take up etching. It was never more than a relaxation with him, and there is an amateurish quality about his plates which is not concealed by the fact that he, far more than Callot, really grasped the quality of the etcher's line. Callot's work in its precision and firmness is very akin to engraving, but Claude's could have been done in no other medium. His power of conveying atmosphere gives an extraordinary beauty to such

Rembrandt van Ryn

The Three Cottages

Etching

plates as "The Cowherd" and "Sunset," which seem drenched in the mellow light of a summer evening. His etchings fall into two groups; the first between 1630 and 1637 being done under the immediate inspiration of Callot, occasionally showing his influence strongly, as in "Campo Vaccino" of 1636. Then there came a long interval, for the next plate is dated 1651. The etchings of the second group never quite approach the delicate perfection of the earlier plates.

Just as the earliest engravings in England were the work of immigrant foreigners, so the first name in English etching is that of a foreigner, Wenceslaus Hollar. He was born at Prague, in 1607, and in the pursuit of his art he drifted to Frankfurt, Strasburg and Cologne, where he came in touch with Thomas Howard, Earl of Arundel. Arundel was a great collector and connoisseur, and he was so impressed by the work of the young artist that he promptly swept him over to England. Hollar's career in England was rather chequered, despite his noble patron, for the Civil War drove Arundel abroad, and Hollar, too, had to leave the country for an eight years' exile in Antwerp just when his prospects seemed most hopeful. He returned to England, however, with the Restoration, but he never really prospered, and was always in bondage to the printsellers. One of the printsellers who seems to have employed him by the hour at a very small wage was William Faithorne, the engraver, in whose house near

Temple Bar Hollar was living in 1654. Hollar's range of subjects was extremely wide, and all are handled in the same delicate, precise manner, without any emotional perception, any depth of tone or any real inspiration. He is the perfect example of the master craftsman, who knows that he can never become a great artist. All that industry and talent can achieve is in his plates; all the vision that would make them works of art is completely lacking. Nevertheless, they are very charming, especially the views of London, with their delicately drawn little buildings set among trees and stiff gardens, and peopled by tranquil figures strolling about their affairs. For the student of the seventeenth century his work is invaluable. Among his technical masterpieces are his studies of female costume, the "Four Seasons," the "Ornatus Muliebris" and the "Aula Veneris," and the series of "Muffs" and "Butterflies" show a power of representing texture which has rarely been approached, except by Rembrandt in his "Shell," and by Jacquemart.

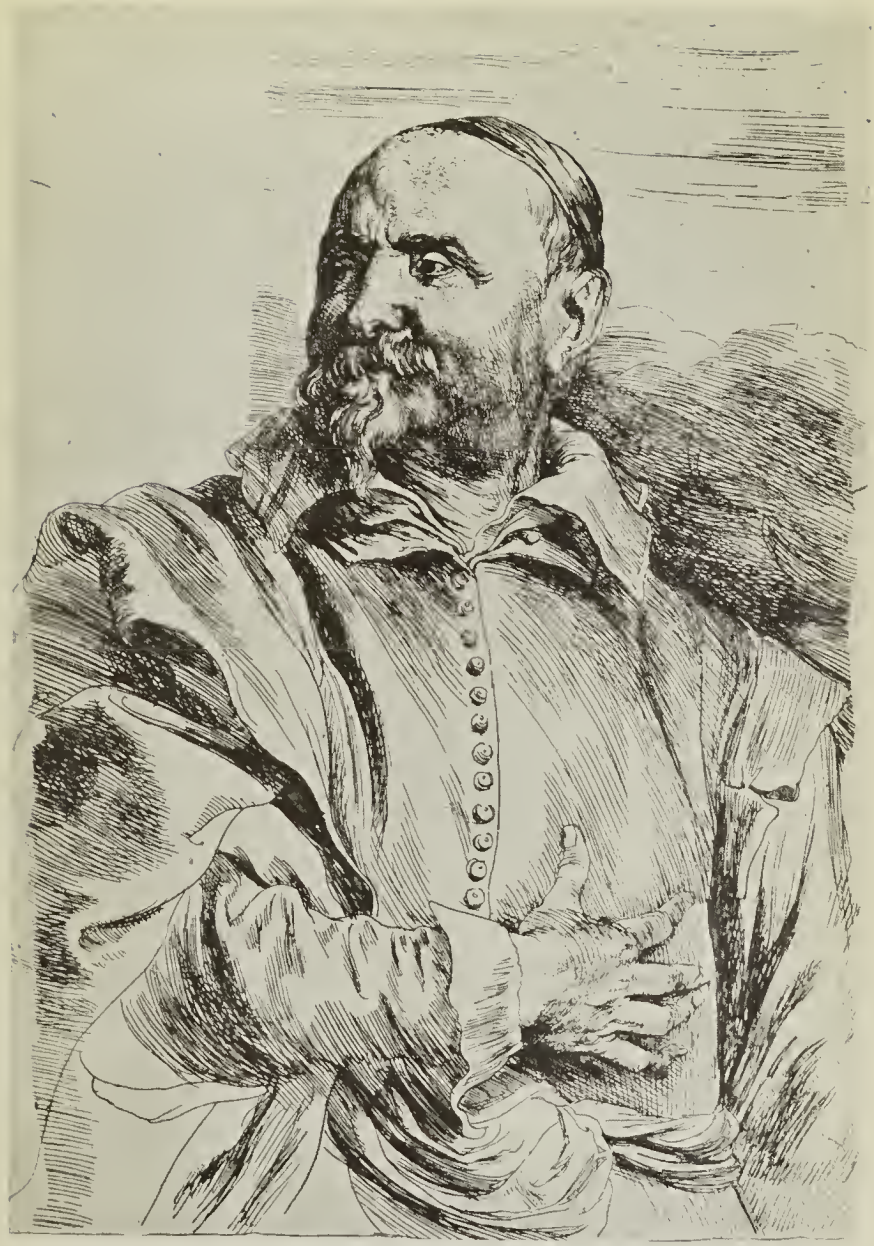
The influence of Rubens, and the encouragement he gave to reproductive engraving killed whatever impulse towards etching there may have been in the Rubens School. The solitary exponent of Flemish etching, and one of the greatest etchers in the world, is Sir Anthony Van Dyck (1599–1641). He was practically the originator of the etched portrait, and immediately raised it to a pitch of perfection which remained unique. Men-

tion has already been made of the "Iconography," and of the eighteen plates for it which Van Dyck etched himself. They were probably done at Antwerp between 1626 and 1632. The project was for a series of engravings, for which Van Dyck supplied drawings in chalk or grisaille, leaving the task of translating the sketches on to the copper to the band of engravers who worked for Rubens. For these eighteen plates, however, he etched the heads, with indications of the hands and draperies, the whole to be completed by the engravers. Five plates escaped the re-working and finishing, "Pieter Brueghel the Younger," "Erasmus," "J. de Momper," "J. Snellinx" and "J. Sustermans," and of the remaining plates there are a few impressions extant which were taken before the engraving was added. These etchings are among the treasured and most valuable in the world. They are done in an open manner, in strong contrast to Rembrandt's portraits, and the certainty and power of the draughtsmanship, the economy of line and the revelation of character, as well as the technical skill in the handling, are little short of marvellous.

In Holland the seventeenth century was a period of amazing artistic brilliance. Freed at last from the deadening influence of Italian models, Dutch art discovered its own peculiar genius, and expressed it through a series of famous names such as have never again been crowded into so short a time. Painters such as

Frans Hals, Hobbema, Vermeer, Terborch, Jan Steen, Paul Potter, Pieter de Hooch, Aelbert Cuyp and many others throng this century, and the greatest among them is Rembrandt. Curiously enough, he was almost the only one of them to practise etching, and if he holds in painting a high place among the great masters, in etching he is the supreme master, unapproached and unapproachable. It is not possible to trace in his work any "influences," which indeed never make an artist, but which give him something to work on in the formation of his style, for Rembrandt invented a style and there is no greater triumph of genius. In Newman's words, "it is like crossing a country before roads are made from place to place." All the other great etchers have had a tradition behind them; they have pruned, condensed, altered, improved, but they have stood on a road leading from the past to the future. Rembrandt was in a country unexplored. He is not only the greatest master of all time, but the fountain-head of all modern etching.

Rembrandt Harmensz van Rijn was born in 1606, the son of a miller of Leyden. He first studied under Jacob van Swanenburgh in Leyden and afterwards for a brief period under Lastman in Amsterdam. By 1628 he was an independent artist in Leyden, with Gerard Dou as his pupil. He firmly refused to make the conventional tour to Italy, which at that time was considered indispensable to an artistic education, and which



Sir Anthony van Dyck

Jan Snellinx

Etching

invariably severely damaged young talent from the North. Rembrandt worked in Leyden all his life, marrying Saskia van Ulenburch in 1634, and after her death in 1642, marrying his housekeeper, Hendrickje Stoffels. All his life he was in money difficulties, and in 1656 he was declared bankrupt, a fact to which we owe an inventory of the contents of his house. There is a tradition that he was in England about 1661–2, but there is no sound proof of this. He died in Leyden in October, 1669.

The number of really authentic Rembrandt etchings is still disputed, varying between the 71 of Legros and the 329 of Middleton. The *via media* as usual seems to be correct, and Mr. A. M. Hind considers that about 290 plates are indubitably genuine, although in some of these the hand of the pupil or assistant is apparent. The whole question of authenticity is of great interest, but it turns for the most part on severely technical details, and is quite outside the scope of this work, and outside the radius of the average collector. The advanced collector will find no lack of material for study.

Rembrandt etchings may conveniently be divided into portraits, religious subjects and landscapes. As a portrait etcher he does not quite reach the brilliant attractiveness of Van Dyck, whose quick grasp of personality, rendered with so much sympathy and grace, makes an immediate appeal. But Rembrandt goes deeper, and is more penetrating. In his "Clement de Jonghe" he follows

Van Dyck's open method of working, and beats him at his own game. His other portraits are all executed in strong chiaroscuro, attained by extremely fine cross-hatching. The earliest known plates are the two small portraits of his mother, dated 1628, which already show the characteristics of his fully developed manner, although the technique is naturally uncertain. Several portraits of himself, and several of his wife, Saskia, belong to his first period of etching, but he did not attain in etching anything like his command of portraiture in oils until about 1646, when "Ephraim Bonus," "Jan Asselyn" and "Jan Six" appeared. These were followed by "Clement de Jonghe" in 1651, considered by many to be the best of Rembrandt's portrait plates, and later by "Arnold Tholinx," which shows a more profound interpretation of character than any of the other portraits, unless that which renders so profoundly and sympathetically the worn and wrinkled features of his mother.

All Rembrandt's work shows the advance from minute delicacy of treatment to an increased breadth and a more open manner, and finally to a very wide handling of the line and a complementary use of dry-point. The earlier prints, especially the little genre plates of beggars, such as the "Blind Fiddler" of 1631, are executed mainly in pure line, but in the middle period much more emphasis is laid on tone, which is attained by very fine hatching. In the plates of his final period the

chiaroscuro is often gained by the expedient of leaving ink on the surface of the plate in the printing. When successful, this produces a wonderful effect, but the method is very difficult to control, and the result is always uncertain. Among the finest plates treated in this manner are the "Three Crosses" of 1653, the "Descent from the Cross by Torchlight" and the "Entombment." The earlier religious plates begin with "Christ Disputing with the Doctors," of 1630, and the different handling of his second period is revealed in the "Raising of Lazarus" and "Entombment" of about 1642. These two plates are amazing in their significance, and economy of line. Among the biblical subjects is Rembrandt's most famous plate, "Christ with the Sick around Him, receiving little Children," which is usually known as the "Hundred Guilder Print."

Rembrandt's landscape plates, which perhaps nowadays make a stronger appeal than his other choice of subjects, almost all belong to 1640-1653. Most of the plates are executed in open line, with almost no shading. The most extreme example of this method is perhaps "Six's Bridge," which seems to be hardly more than a sketch. This treatment was peculiarly suited to the wide Dutch landscape, with its great expanse of sky and sweep of flat country, and Rembrandt manages to fill these lightly drawn plates with a wonderful feeling of space and air. The "Gold-Weigher's Field" of 1651 is the most perfect of the

landscapes, and in a few inches of paper the eye is led from point to point over miles of flat fields and hedges and little villages to the distant horizon under the broad still sky. Other plates almost as perfect are the "View of Omval," "Two Cottages with Pointed Gables," "Cottages beside a Canal," "View of Amsterdam" and "Three Gabled Cottages." Occasionally Rembrandt departed from his usual method of handling landscape and attempted a rendering of atmospheric effect, as in the "Three Trees" of 1643, one of his best-known plates, but he seems to have felt that this treatment was not so suitable for expressing the peculiar charm of the Dutch country.

The study of Rembrandt prints is greatly complicated by the fact that very many of the original plates are still in existence, and that they have not always been accorded the reverence they deserve. Prints taken comparatively recently from the original plates are constantly turning up, and though in some cases, where the plate is very worn, deception is impossible, in others it is often extremely difficult to tell at what date the impression was taken. Some of the eighteenth century prints are extraordinarily good, skilful printing having concealed the wear in the plate. Impressions of eighty-five plates, which in some cases had been reworked, were published about 1785 by P. F. Basan, a Paris dealer and engraver, and the same plates were acquired in 1846 by

Michel Bernard, who issued a much inferior set. Still more recently in 1906, Alvin-Beaumont and Bernard published prints of seventy-nine of these plates, which in most cases are a mere travesty of the originals. The date of an impression naturally makes a great deal of difference with regard to its value. The only certain means of telling whether a print is original, or is from a later and reworked plate, is by a minute comparison with the original or with a good reproduction, such as those in the vast work of Rovinski, since the fine appreciation which can sift at a glance can only be the result of years of experience.[1] The prices of really good impressions of Rembrandt prints have in recent years soared completely out of the reach of all but the very wealthy. In 1912 the "Three Crosses" was sold in Berlin for £300, and the same print in November, 1928, fetched £1,875 at a Leipzig sale. At the same sale the portrait of "Clement de Jonghe" went to a Swiss dealer for £675, and the portrait of the artist's mother with black veil was bought for £420. At Messrs. Boerner's Sale at Leipzig in May, 1928, two impressions of the "Presentation in the Temple," a dark proof on Japanese paper and a lighter proof, fetched £2,150 and £1,800 respectively. The sale of the famous Six Collection at Amsterdam in October, 1928, was notable for record prices for Rembrandt etchings. A

[1] A complete list of the Rembrandt plates from which later impressions have been taken is given by A. M. Hind in "Rembrandt's Etchings," 1912, Vol. I., p. 17.

superb proof of the portrait of Burgomaster Six in its second state fetched £7,500, and a third state £2,300. "Joseph tells his Dream" was sold for £3,200, and several others at approximate prices. At the same time, quite good impressions of the less famous plates can often be obtained for far more reasonable sums.

From one aspect of Rembrandt's genius, which revealed itself in his studies of beggars and vagabonds as well as in those human touches which animate his most sublime scriptural themes, there sprang the school of Dutch genre etching, foreshadowed by the early work of Lucas van Leyden, and now blossoming fully in the art of Adriaen van Ostade and Cornelis Bega. Ostade, who was primarily a painter, attached so little importance to his etchings that in his life-time they were not published in any numbers, and those who were responsible for their publication after his death did not hesitate to have many of his plates reworked. It is, therefore, only in the rare first impressions that the quality of Ostade's work can be justly estimated. His plates are all scenes of the daily life of Dutch peasants, and he is at his best in his interiors, in which he handles with great effect the strong contrasts of tone afforded by the light streaming through the small windows. Such plates as "Saying Grace," the "Backgammon Players," or "A Peasant paying his Score," could hardly be surpassed in their own line. Among the open-air

Adriaen van Ostade

Anglers on a Bridge

Etching

scenes, "Anglers on a Bridge" shows an unexpected skill in the handling of landscape, and the atmosphere of a summer afternoon is finely rendered in "A Woman Spinning." Cornelis Bega, who was a pupil of Ostade, is, technically speaking, the finer etcher, but the delicate precision of his line does not suit his subjects so well as Ostade's rather rough methods. Cornelis Dusart, also a pupil of Ostade, is unsatisfactory because of his uncertain draughtsmanship.

As a branch of the genre school we may consider the very important etchers of animals. Aelbert Cuyp holds a foremost place among them, in spite of the fact that only eight of his plates are known, and they are little more than summary sketches. Paul Potter, who died in 1654, when only twenty-nine, never attained the vigour and certainty of Cuyp, but his eighteen plates are masterly in their feeling of sympathy with animal life. The best prints are perhaps those of horses set in charming flat landscapes, and the "Friesland Horse" and "Two Plough Horses" may be singled out. Adriaen van de Velde is nearly as fine an etcher, but for many people his work is rather spoilt by the Italian influences which it displays. A small group of Dutch animal painters was at this time settled in Rome, of whom the most important was Pieter van Laer. Nicholas Berchem's work is very unequal, but at its best admirably renders the sunny southern atmosphere. Karel Dujardin is another

member of the group whose etchings may be looked for.

In the domain of landscape, in which Dutch art is so often at its best, there are several etchers of great, if not of outstanding merit. Jan van Goyen, Herman Saftleven and Roeland Roghman all produced works of interest, while Allart van Everdingen's etchings of Norwegian scenery are charming in their delicacy and sensitiveness. Anthonie Waterloo is no longer very highly appreciated, but is of importance owing to his influence on Jacob van Ruysdael, whose few plates of trees are only surpassed by Rembrandt. Seascape etching did not have many adherents, but Reynier Nooms (Zeeman) and Ludolph Bakhuysen produced many attractive plates. The collector of moderate means will find in the great mass of seventeenth century Dutch engraving many fields of interest in which he can indulge his taste without too great a strain on his resources.

The eighteenth century witnessed the almost complete extinction of the art of etching in those countries where it had hitherto flourished. Italy alone preserved the continuity, and in this country, where previously etching had been of little account, three masters now appear, Tiepolo, Canaletto and Piranesi, all of them, curiously enough, springing from Venice. Giovanni Battista Tiepolo (1696–1770), was not a prolific etcher, but he took his etching seriously and

not merely as a relaxation from his painting, and his plates, about fifty in number, seem to be a reincarnation of the spirit of earlier Venetian art. The characteristics of his paintings are closely reproduced; there is the same triangular composition, the same effect of airiness and light, attained in this case by using very lightly bitten lines with little shading and by leaving large areas of the paper untouched. His most important plate is the "Adoration of the Magi," based on his own picture, and his most charming work is in the ten plates of the "Capricci," which include some delightful and frequently reproduced pictures of Satyr families. A series of larger plates, the "Scherzi di Fantasia," are rather incomprehensible with their meaningless tumult of figures. Tiepolo's son, Giovanni Domenico, has a much heavier hand as an etcher, and a far less happy invention. Very many of his plates are after his father's designs.

The Venetian school of architectural etching, which flourished in the early part of the eighteenth century, culminated in Antonio Canale, usually called Canaletto, who was born in Venice in 1697. His etchings, like his paintings, show great skill in the representation of distance and atmosphere, especially in the sense of sunshine, in which his plates are always steeped. His simple manner of shading gives his buildings an effect of great solidity, yet he is able to get vivacity of movement into the hurrying gondolas of the Venetian canals

and the busy people of the streets. In the rendering of atmosphere he is the rival of Claude, and plates such as the "Porch with a Lantern," or "Torre di Malghera" are almost oppressive with the heat that strikes out from the stones. His nephew and pupil, Bernardo Belotto, worked in Canaletto's manner, but with an individuality of his own.

Giovanni Battista Piranesi (1721?—1778) also belonged to the Venetian architectural school, though most of his life was spent in Rome. He was trained as an architect and the bent of his interest was definitely antiquarian, but in his numerous large etchings of the buildings and ruins of ancient Rome his genuine artistic feeling for his subjects has overcome his precise archæological intentions. The plates were designed as architectural records; they have insisted on becoming works of art. He always worked on a very large scale, with strong contrasts of light and shade and with heavy masses in the foreground; his prints are not for the portfolio but, like Brangwyn's, should be hung on a wall to achieve their real effect. The most important of his archæological sets are "Le Antichità Romane" and the "Vedute di Roma," but his triumph lies in the sixteen plates of the "Carceri." These are imaginative representations of the interior of prisons, generally composed with a framework of arches and galleries, through which appear the piled up paraphernalia of torture—wheels,

Antonio Canale, *called* Canaletto

The Portico with the Lantern

Etching

racks, scaffoldings, ropes, ladders and chains. The origin of much modern etching which subdues into patterns the cranes and scaffoldings of the modern workman may be traced in these prints of Piranesi who, in his purely architectural drawings, is also the forerunner of Meryon. Piranesi's sons, Franceso and Pietro, carried on their father's work, with far less of his inspiration, and in the first years of the nineteenth century they reissued in twenty-seven volumes the whole of their father's work with additions of their own. A second edition was issued about 1835, and still more modern impressions have been taken from very many of the plates.

At the end of the eighteenth century England, which up to this time had produced very little native talent, struck out an entirely new line in etching with the work of the great caricaturists. (The art of caricature had been faintly foreshadowed by Da Vinci's grotesque heads and by some Dutch work, but its real home has always been in England.) Hogarth, of course, had pointed the way, but Rowlandson and Gillray owe very little to his direct influence. In no other country and no other period than in England of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries would such productions have been possible, and they go to the roots of the English character with their broad humour, their disrespect for personalities or institutions, and their essentially moral tone, which enables them, like Juvenal, to dwell

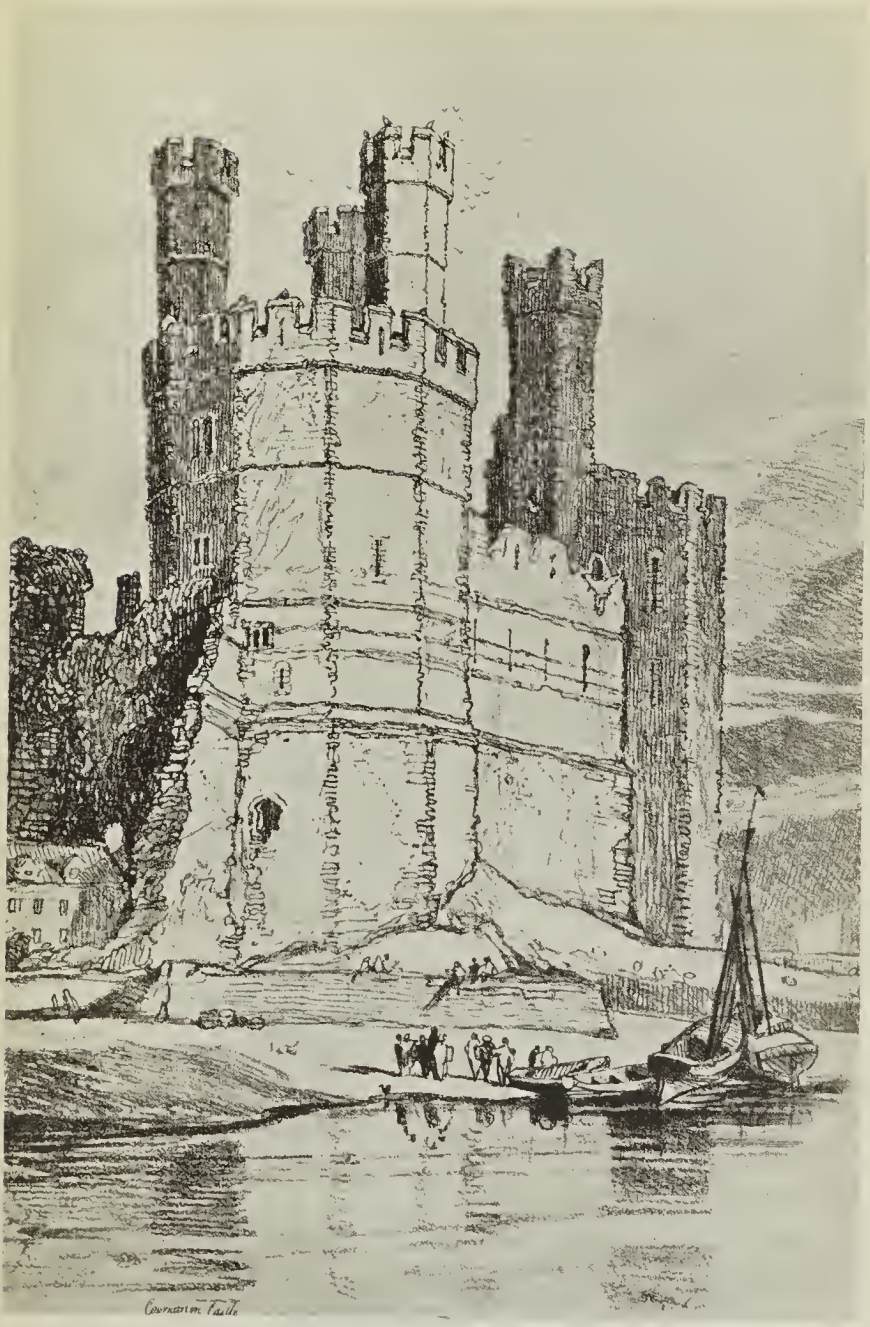
on scenes of vice from the purest possible motives. The greatest of the caricaturists is Thomas Rowlandson (1756–1827), who started life with the ambition of becoming a great painter on the traditional lines, but whose love of turbulent living made him slip into the easier task of portraying the society among which he spent his days. Much of his work was book-illustration for Rudolph Ackermann, the print-seller, who saw to it that his commissions were executed to time. In these prints, which are mostly coloured, Rowlandson's work ended with the etching of the plate in pure line, the colouring being done afterwards by another hand. Rowlandson, like Hogarth, preferred social to political caricature, and the manners and fashions of the day gave him plenty of opportunities. As an etcher he is not remarkable from the technical point of view, but his draughtsmanship is astonishing, and his power of representing character in a few lines and of giving animation to a crowded scene far surpasses Hogarth. We are speaking here of etchings only, and it has been the custom to regard Rowlandson first and foremost as the caricaturist. It must be remembered, however, that in his more serious work in water-colour—whether in figure subjects or in landscape—he stands out as one of the greatest British masters of drawing, and, with his delicate sense of colour, one of the leaders in the finest school of water-colour that the world has ever known. James Gillray (1757–

1815) is a much inferior artist, but his political denunciations are amazing in their savagery and licence. Among the artists of the period working in the medium of caricature, Robert Dighton and his son, Richard, show sound draughtsmanship and fertile, though restrained, invention, and Henry Alken's sporting prints still retain their popularity. Later caricaturists who continued the tradition are George Cruickshank, much of whose work was reproduced in wood-engraving, and Hablot Knight Browne ("Phiz"), whose illustrations were introduced to every household.

At the beginning of the following century the first signs of a really native art of etching began to appear in England. Girtin and Turner, Crome and Cotman, Wilkie and Geddes, are the first artists of the British School of etching and foreshadow the lines on which it was to develop. They are all a little isolated from each other, and had no immediate followers, for in this belated development there is no continuity of tradition, and progress is by a series of independent leaps. Turner and Girtin in particular stand outside the full stream of the history of etching, for with neither of them was etching an end in itself. Turner's etchings were made for the "Liber Studiorum," an immense collection of landscape plates, dating from 1807 onwards, which will be considered more fully in the chapter on Mezzotint. For these plates he first made drawings in sepia, and then etched the outlines of his subject, handing over the plate for

completion in mezzotint to one of the many accomplished craftsmen of the day. Only a few proofs were pulled from the etched plate, and they are, in consequence, extremely rare. These etched plates reveal Turner's mastery of composition and the vigour and certainty of his draughtsmanship rather than any decided bent for etching *per se*. Almost all the plates are extremely fine, but perhaps the most remarkable are the "The Junction of the Severn and the Wye," "Via Mala," "Hindhead Hill" and the "Little Devil's Bridge." Girtin's few etchings of Paris were done as a foundation for aquatint, and are in the soft-ground process. They are extremely rare, and can really only be studied in a Museum collection. It is worth a journey, however, to see such a print as the etched plate of "Belle-Vue and the Pont de Sève from the Terrace at St. Cloud."

With Wilkie and Geddes we return to etching as an end in itself. Sir David Wilkie (1785–1841) produced about thirteen plates, using dry-point freely. His work is a little over-elaborated, but "Reading the Will" and "The Lost Receipt" are admirable pieces of genre. Andrew Geddes (1783–1844) is much more important as an etcher. He adhered very closely to the Rembrandt tradition, and his portrait of his mother, with its rich and sensitive dry-point, is not unworthy to set beside the work of his great exemplar. His few landscapes, too, show a freedom in handling which is remarkable for the period in which



John Sell Cotman
Caernarvon Castle
Soft-ground Etching

they were produced, and owe as much to Rembrandt as do his portraits. "Peckham Rye" is a particularly bold and charming interpretation of a rural scene.

But the real revival, or rather beginning, of etching in England, was due to the Norwich School, which in etching, as in painting, established a purely native school of landscape, and pointed the way for many generations of etchers. John Crome (1768–1821) etched about forty plates, which were not greatly esteemed at the time, and which he himself regarded as merely a relaxation. They were not published in any numbers until after his death, and then several plates were reworked. The issues of 1838 and later must be avoided by the collector, and only first impressions sought for. In Crome's masterpiece, for example, "Mousehold Heath," which shows an expanse of rough land under a windy sky, the later editions have a mechanically ruled sky substituted for the original. Crome made large use of soft-ground etching, and in this medium executed most of his studies of trees, which show their descent unmistakably from Waterloo and Ruysdael. John Sell Cotman (1782–1842), the second great painter of the Norwich School, published in 1838 a set of etchings, entitled "Liber Studiorum." These are mainly in soft ground, and a few of them, such as "Harlech Castle," Caernarvon Castle" and "Postwick Grove," are masterpieces of composition and of

searching and sympathetic draughtsmanship. His hard-ground etchings, which are mostly illustrations to books of topography and antiquities, seldom rise above the level of sound craftsmanship. Among the minor etchers of this school mention must be made of the Rev. Edward Thomas Daniell (1804–1842). His plates, of which the finest is " Borough Bridge," are curiously modern in outlook. Very interesting work was done by Joseph Stannard (1797–1830), who has been rather overshadowed by his greater contemporaries, and of lesser importance are James Stark and George Vincent. And after this outburst of vigour there is again a gap in the continuity of the tradition, and etching in England lay dormant until the modern revival.

CHAPTER V

MEZZOTINT ENGRAVING

MEZZOTINT is the most important of what are known as the Tone Processes, that is, methods of engraving which achieve their result by building up the picture in tones, corresponding to the gradation of colours in painting, instead of emphasising pure line with tone a secondary consideration, as in etching and engraving. Mezzotint produces an extraordinarily rich effect with deep velvety shadows, and for some inexplicable reason it took a particularly firm root in England, so much so that at one time it was known on the Continent as "la manière anglaise."

The method of mezzotint is precisely the opposite of that of etching or engraving. In these two processes the start is made from a plate that would print white if all the ink were wiped off, and then lines are added to it, which hold ink, and printing dark form the picture. A mezzotint plate, before being worked on, would print a solid black. The plain copper plate is roughened all over by means of a "rocking tool" or "rocker" which is like

a broad short chisel with a curved edge. The face is closely grooved into ridges, and when these are ground off at an angle from the back the edge is broken into a set of pointed "teeth." This tool is rocked backwards and forwards at different angles all over the plate, often in forty or fifty directions, so that the surface is completely covered with burr, which holds a great deal of ink and prints a deep black. Then, to obtain the picture, the burr is scraped away where the lights are wanted, by means of a thin and very sharp piece of steel, rather like a penknife blade, and known as a mezzotint scraper. The gradation in the lights is determined by the amount of burr which is removed, and the very high lights are polished with a burnisher.

The invention of mezzotint has been popularly but mistakenly attributed to Prince Rupert. There is no doubt that in fact the process was first discovered by Ludwig von Siegen, who was born at Utrecht in 1609 and was a soldier in the service of the Landgrave of Hesse-Cassel. He led a roving life, but in 1641 he settled in Amsterdam for a few peaceful years, and it is probably more than a coincidence that he should have produced the first mezzotint plate at the time when Rembrandt was employing the method of leaving the fullest films of ink on his etched plate to obtain an effect of strong chiaroscuro. It was in 1642 that von Siegen sent to the Landgrave of Hesse-Cassel the "Portrait of the Landgravine Amelia

Elizabeth," accompanied by a letter in which he definitely claimed the invention as his own. Only a few of his plates are known, and their artistic interest is small compared with their historical importance.

It was in 1654, in Brussels, that von Siegen met Prince Rupert, the son of Frederick V. and Elizabeth of Bohemia, and a nephew of Charles I. He was an enthusiastic and talented amateur of the arts, and von Siegen revealed to him the secret of the new invention. Prince Rupert began experimenting with the medium, and among some plates similar in manner to those of Siegen and of little more interest he produced "The Executioner of St. John the Baptist," a really fine and vigorous work after José de Ribera (Lo Spagnoletto). In 1660 the Restoration brought Rupert back to England, and he demonstrated the method of mezzotint to John Evelyn. Evelyn's diary for 1681 records: "This afternoon Prince Rupert shew'd me with his own hands the new way of graving called Mezzo Tinto, which afterwards by his permission I published in my 'History of Chalcography.'" Evelyn's account in the "History" was calculated to mystify rather than to inform, but Prince Rupert obviously had no desire to keep the secret to himself, and soon several artists were struggling with the new technique.

One characteristic of mezzotint, which accounts both for its wide popularity and for the slight dislike

with which many people regard it, is that it has almost always, until quite modern days, been employed only for the reproduction of pictures. Of course it is eminently fitted for this purpose, and the beauty and fidelity of very many of the reproductions of Gainsborough and Reynolds cannot be denied, but it is curious that it was left for Sir Frank Short, in our own time, to demonstrate the use that could be made of mezzotint in original engraving. The charm of the process, then, depends, as a rule, upon the original from which it is taken, and the great period of mezzotint engraving did not come until towards the end of the eighteenth century, the period of Reynolds, Romney and Gainsborough. After the first few experimental years, when many foreign artists tried their hand at the new method, the history of mezzotint lies entirely in England.

In the early mezzotints the ground is generally laid by means of roulettes, for the rocking-tool was not discovered for some years. Sometimes a finely-grooved roller was used, and traces of both methods can be seen in the work of Prince Rupert. Both roller and roulette were difficult to manipulate evenly, and this accounts for the irregularity of the grain in early mezzotints. The invention of the rocking-tool is generally ascribed to Abraham Blooteling, but it is possible that it was already known to Wallerant Vaillant, the first of the professional mezzotinters. Vaillant was a Frenchman domiciled in Amsterdam, and

Wallerant Vaillant

Memento Mori

Mezzotint

he is said to have acted as assistant to Prince Rupert. He engraved a large number of plates, mainly after Italian and Dutch pictures, but the most interesting are his several portraits of Prince Rupert.

With Abraham Blooteling, who worked in London until 1676, the history of mezzotint as an art really begins. His use of rocker and scraper was that followed by all subsequent engravers, and in his magnificent portraits after Lely he set the pattern for all future achievement. His most famous plates are "James Duke of Monmouth," "Charles II.," "Catherine of Braganza" and "William of Orange." Gerard Valck and Jan Verkolje are the most important of the other Dutch mezzotinters working in England at this time. Among the earliest English engravers working in mezzotint in the seventeenth century are Edward Luttrell, an Irishman, and Isaac Beckett. Luttrell's work is competent though not inspiring, but Beckett's reproductions of Kneller occasionally reach a very high level. George White, who worked in the first quarter of the eighteenth century, is the first of the great names. His method of combining etching with rocked work enabled him to achieve a very subtle modelling of the face, and his portraits of "Dryden" and "Pope," both after Kneller, foreshadow the great achievements of the end of the century. Occasionally, as in the "Abel Roper," after Hysing, he starts with a complete etching as a foundation

for the rocked work. It became the usual practice to etch at least an outline to serve as a basis for mezzotint. John Smith (1672–1742), who was a pupil of Isaac Beckett, was Kneller's chief interpreter, and before his quarrel with the painter he translated 138 of his pictures on to the copper. The smooth modelling and rich tones of these splendid prints softened and refined the rather hard painting of Kneller, and a good deal of Kneller's reputation may be said to be due to the excellence of his engraver. Smith worked also after many other artists, Wissing, Dahl, Kerseboom and Richardson among them, and also reproduced many subject pictures after Titian and Correggio, but his fame really rests on the Kneller portraits. The best of these perhaps are "Portrait of the Painter," "Portrait of himself," "Isaac Beckett," "Earl of Seafield," "Duchess of Grafton, and "Corelli." When Kneller and Smith broke up this partnership, Smith's place as Kneller's engraver was taken by John Simon, a French Protestant refugee. His work never quite equals that of Smith, but his delicate and sensitive plates have a charm of their own. "Colley Cibber," after Grisoni, is one of his most attractive efforts.

Between the period of Kneller and that of Reynolds mezzotint inevitably followed painting in its almost complete decline. The continuity of the mezzotint tradition was, however, preserved by the work of John Faber the younger, who

covers the gap between the two great painters, and whose work invests with an alien charm the pictures of many undistinguished artists. His earliest plates are after Kneller, his latest after Reynolds. His best known are the "Beauties of Hampton Court," "Elizabeth, Duchess of Hamilton," "Handel," the forty-seven plates of the "Kit-Cat Club," after Kneller, "Peg Woffington as Mrs. Ford," and "Lady Christiana Moray." With the appearance of Reynolds mezzotint engraving becomes almost entirely devoted to portrait reproduction, but the work of Richard Earlom stands a little outside the general tendency. His long life did not end until 1822, but he succeeded in avoiding the lure of Reynolds, and produced many interesting and unusual plates. Among them are the "Flower Pieces," after Van Huysum, Hogarth's "Marriage à la Mode," Zoffany's "Life School at the Royal Academy," a landscape after Hobbema, and various still-life subjects after Snyders. His most important work, both artistically and historically, is the series of plates after Claude's "Liber Veritatis." These were done with an etched foundation for the mezzotint, and both the conception of the work and its technique inspired Turner in his famous "Liber Studiorum," which remains the great monument of mezzotint.

The great period begins about 1750 and continues into the nineteenth century. The level of technical achievement in the mezzotints of this

period is amazingly high, but the beauty of the prints depends not so much on the craftsmen who engraved the plates as on the artists who provided the inspiration. In Reynolds, Romney and Gainsborough the mezzotint engravers had an almost inexhaustible source of graceful masterpieces, for the interpretation of which their own art was eminently suited. The origins of the brilliant school of mezzotinters lie in Dublin, where John Brooks, who had learnt mezzotint engraving in London, set up in 1740 as an engraver and print-seller in Cork Hill. With him was his friend, Andrew Miller, a Scotsman, and it is debatable which of the two played the greater part in training the band of young artists who were the first to realise the full potentialities of mezzotint. Brooks's own work does not amount to very much, and his fame rests on the achievement of his pupils, who included James McArdell, Richard Houston, Charles Spooner, Michael Ford and Richard Purcell. In 1746 Brooks returned to London, and took with him McArdell and Houston, and with this emigration the glory of mezzotint unfolds. McArdell was one of the great masters of the process, and it was unfortunate that his early death in 1765 deprived him of the opportunity of translating Reynolds at his greatest. But almost all his prints are sheer delights, sympathetic in handling and with a wonderful command of representing texture. He engraved thirty-eight of the Reynolds portraits, among

James McArdell, after Sir Joshua Reynolds

Mrs. Bonfoy

Mezzotint. Engraver's Proof, before all letters

them " Mrs. Catherine Chambers " and the " Earl of Rothes," but his best work is after other masters. " Mrs. Middleton " and " Elizabeth Hamilton, Comtesse de Grammont " are interpretations of Lely that were far beyond the powers of the painter's contemporaries, and " Mary, Duchess of Ancaster," after Hudson, is perhaps his masterpiece. Other superb prints are " Lady Mary Coke," after Allan Ramsay, and " Lords John and Bernard Stuart," after Van Dyck. Richard Houston's intermittent work was very nearly as good as McArdell's, as is shown by such prints as " Richard Robinson, Bishop of Kildare " and " The Duchess of Marlborough," both after Reynolds. His real genius lay, however, in the curious direction of interpeting Rembrandt, after whose pictures he engraved some magnificent plates, which reveal a surprisingly sympathetic comprehension. The " Syndics," the " Man Mending a Pen," " Man with a Knife," and " The Burgomaster," are among the prizes of the mezzotint collector. William Pether also engraved many plates after Rembrandt, but did not succeed in avoiding a definitely eighteenth-century air. The paintings by Wright of Derby, with their powerful chiaroscuro effects, appealed to him for the same reason as the work of Rembrandt, and inspired some of his most successful prints. The success of McArdell and Houston brought to London a host of other ambitious Dublin engravers, for many of whom the

pleasures of the metropolis proved an irresistible counter-attraction. Edward Fisher, John Dixon and James Watson, however, rank scarcely behind McArdell and Houston. Fisher's most popular print is "Lady Sarah Bunbury," after Reynolds, and among Dixon's most attractive engravings are "Lady O'Brien" and the "Countess of Pembroke," both after Reynolds. James Watson produced a large number of plates, among which it is difficult to choose, but perhaps the best are those after Reynolds, including "Lady Stanhope," "Lady Scarsdale," the "Countess of Carlisle," and "Caroline, Duchess of Marlborough."

Splendid as the work of these men very often was, the best of the Reynolds engravers were still to come. Valentine Green, John Jones and John Raphael Smith are a trio whose immense popularity is reflected in the sale-room prices of their prints. Valentine Green did a very large number of plates, among them some of the finest mezzotints in the world, but his work was uneven, and very often, especially when he departs from Reynolds, he becomes really bad. The collector of moderate means, however, who cannot contemplate the prices charged for the Reynolds ladies, will find a large number of attractive and interesting prints at reasonable prices. Green's famous portraits after Reynolds include such superb prints as "Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire," the "Duchess of Rutland," "Lady Louisa Manners," "Lady Betty Delmé and Children,"

Valentine Green, after Sir Joshua Reynolds

Jane, Countess of Harrington

Mezzotint

the "Countess of Salisbury" and "Lady Jane Halliday." His masterpiece has always been considered "The Ladies Waldegrave." Many excellent prints are after Gainsborough, Romney and Opie, and he also did many subject plates after old masters. John Jones differs from the other members of this group in that he has a more virile manner and a command of broad effects. He engraved after Reynolds, Romney and Raeburn, in each case preferring portraits of men to those of women. "Edmund Burke," after Romney, is one of his best plates, and among his few portraits of women there are the charming "Lady Caroline Price," after Reynolds, and "Mrs. Davenport," after Romney. Thomas Watson is one of the best mezzotinters of the period, especially in his plates after Reynolds. "Lady Bampfylde" is perhaps the most prized of all the Reynolds ladies, and "Mrs. Crewe," "Warren Hastings" and "David Garrick," all after Reynolds, are among the masterpieces of their kind. Watson also engraved the "Beauties of Windsor" series, after Lely. William Dickinson, who was in partnership with Watson, produced many fine mezzotints after Reynolds. "Diana, Viscountess Crosbie," "Jane, Duchess of Gordon" and "Lady Taylor" are typical examples of his style. After Romney he engraved "Miss Benedetta Ramus," and "Sir John Fielding," after Peters, is a remarkable print. James Walker, who was a pupil of Valentine Green, devoted himself mainly to

Romney, after whom he engraved the lovely plates of "Lady Isabella Hamilton" and "Mrs. Masters," but early in his life he went to St. Petersburg, and dropped out of the stream.

All the brilliant triumphs which mezzotint had won up to this time find their culmination in John Raphael Smith (1752–1812). Perhaps it was his own ability as a portrait painter which enabled him to interpret colour in terms of tone with such an unfailing touch, and his artistic talent raised the majority of his plates far above the level of mere clever reproductions of other men's genius. He made a remarkable departure from the ordinary engraver's work of his time in his very spirited renderings of the social life of his period, notably the "Promenade at Carlisle House," his original study for which is in the Victoria and Albert Museum. In design and characterisation this mezzotint is a masterpiece for which an extremely high price is now exacted in the sale-room. As a rule, however, his original work cannot hold its own beside his superb translations of Reynolds and Romney. It is difficult to make distinctions among these, for he seldom fell below his best work, but perhaps the most striking are "Mrs. Carnac," the "Hon. Mrs. Stanhope," "Lord Richard Cavendish," "Richard Robinson, Archbishop of Armagh" and "Colonel Tarleton," all after Reynolds, and after Romney "Mrs. Carwardine and Child," "Emma, Lady Hamilton," "Louisa, Viscountess Stormont" and

John Raphael Smith

The Promenade at Carlisle House

Mezzotint

" Mrs. Robinson." But J. R. Smith had a much wider range than the majority of his fellow-workers in the Reynolds field, and among his best prints are those after George Morland. He is as successful in conveying the atmosphere of sunlight and wind in a farmyard as in picturing the delicate trivialities of my lady's toilette, and in this aspect of his art he was ably seconded by his pupils, William and James Ward. William Ward's prints after Morland, his brother-in-law, are extremely popular, and their prices correspond. Among them are " The Fruits of Early Industry and Economy," " The Country Stable," " The Sportsman's Return," " The Pleasures of Retirement " and many others of equal fame. His portrait plates, however, are as good as anything that had been done previously, as is sufficiently proved by the " Daughters of Sir Thomas Frankland," and " The Salad Girl " after Hoppner. James, his younger brother, was equal in talent but more erratic in temperament, and his plates are far fewer, for he suddenly abandoned engraving and devoted himself entirely to painting. The best of his prints are after Hoppner, among them " Juvenile Retirement," " Children Bathing " and " Miss Francis Vane as ' Miranda '." He also did many plates after Morland, and several after his own paintings, such as " The Dairy Farm."

Many minor engravers of the period, whose work as a whole will not bear close inspection, produced one or two charming and popular

prints. Such are "Lady Hamilton as Nature," after Romney, by Henry Meyer, "Nelly O'Brien," after Reynolds, by Charles Phillips, "The Oddie Children", after Beechey, by Thomas Park, and "Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire," after Reynolds, by George Keating.

At the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth centuries, the guiding stars become Hoppner and Lawrence instead of Reynolds and Romney. The level of technical achievement begins to drop, but Charles Turner and S. W. Reynolds are worthy followers of the great tradition. The favourite prints by Turner are those after Hoppner, especially "Lady Louisa Manners," the "Countess of Cholmondeley" and "Lord Nelson," but he also did many fine plates after other artists, ranging from Rembrandt to Raeburn. "The Mill," after Rembrandt, "Le Baiser Envoyé," after Greuze, "Sir Walter Scott," after Raeburn, and "Mrs. Stratton," after Lawrence, are among the most popular. An innovation in his work is the use of aquatint in conjunction with mezzotint. This produces a very luminous effect, but obviously such a mixing of methods could not but lend itself to debasement. A better engraver than Turner was Samuel William Reynolds, whose early work can bear comparison with the prints of J. R. Smith. The "Duchess of Bedford," after Hoppner, and the "Marchioness of Exeter," after Lawrence, are two extremely good plates. But Reynolds was too much inclined in his later

work to the use of a heavily etched foundation, which often completely ruined the picture as a work in tone, making it appear instead as a line drawing heavily shaded. The importance of William Say, a very second-rate engraver, is largely due to his claim that he was the first to employ a steel plate for mezzotint. A copper plate engraved in mezzotint will produce a limited number of fine impressions, for the burr raised by the rocker is very easily worn off. Consequently, only the earlier impressions have any value, and the thin, flat prints one so often meets with are taken from an already worn-out plate. It was to obviate this difficulty that the more lasting steel plate was used, but an impression from a steel plate is usually both hard and thin, and the deterioration of mezzotint from about 1820 was largely due to this practice. A powerful contributing cause, however, was the lack of a successor to the glories of Reynolds and Romney, Hoppner and Lawrence. Mezzotint engraving, being a purely imitative art, declined in company with the art of portrait painting. The most prolific of the later portrait mezzotinters was Samuel Cousins, who typified all the features of the decline. His first plate, "Lady Acland and Children," after Lawrence, is good, but, as he progressed, his work becomes dull and superficial, and he often employed etching and aquatint or stippling to conceal his deficiencies in the handling of pure mezzotint.

With Samuel Cousins we come to the beginning of the "Mixed Method," a hybrid use of etching, line-engraving and stippling, and sometimes the use of mezzotint rockings bitten through an etching ground. The apparent finish and the false brilliancy secured by this debased process meant the ruin of the mezzotint art.

But before this period of decay, a fresh impetus in an altogether different direction was given by the genius of J. M. W. Turner. In 1806, at the age of a little over thirty, Turner's mind was already preoccupied in rivalry with Claude, who had by then won outstanding fame in England as a master of classical landscape. Earlom's "Liber Veritatis" was merely a reproduction in mezzotint of the small studies made by Claude as a record of his compositions, but though the "Liber Veritatis" was the inspiration of the "Liber Studiorum," Turner determined that his work should be much wider in scope, independent of his painting, and much more original. He set out to make a monument of landscape which should embody the real and the imaginative throughout every possible phase of his subject. In the words of his prospectus, issued in 1807, his intention was "to attempt a classification of the various styles of landscape, viz. the historic, mountainous, pastoral, marine and architectural." The system of classification which he adopted for the hundred plates of his original project was suggested to him by William Frederick Wells,

J. M. W. Turner

The Junction of the Severn and the Wye

Mezzotint

the water colour painter, and many a collector, until recent years, must have been puzzled by the small capitals, H (for Historic), E. P. (for Elegant Pastoral), etc., which appear in the upper margin of these prints. Turner made his drawings, most of which are now in the Tate Gallery, in sepia, bit in the main outlines with vigorous etching, and then passed the plate to some mezzotint engraver who completed the print by the aid of Turner's drawing and under the constant supervision of the artist himself. Actually only seventy-one plates (i.e. the frontispiece and seventy plates) were published, though some twenty more plates were engraved or partially finished. The first plate to be engraved was the "Bridge and Goats," which was done almost entirely in aquatint by F. C. Lewis, and aquatint was not infrequently mixed with mezzotint in the later plates. On the whole, however, Turner found that mezzotint rendered his requirements more subtly and effectively, and employed well-known engravers such as Charles Turner, W. Say, S. W. Reynolds, T. Lupton, and others to carry out his ideas. Turner himself mezzotinted several of the published and unpublished plates, among them those masterpieces "The Junction of the Severn and the Wye" and the "Via Mala." Such plates as these and the "Little Devil's Bridge," "Ben Arthur," "Hindhead Hill" and others not only embody the finest fruits of Turner's genius, his intimate knowledge of nature

and his superb draughtsmanship, but remain as landmarks in the history of the art of mezzotint.

The "Liber" was issued in fourteen parts (each containing five plates) between 1807 and 1819. Purchasers, however, were difficult to find, perhaps owing to the extreme irregularity with which the plates were issued, and the uncertainty as to what "state" might be received. In any case the publication at the time met with little success, and Turner became discouraged and suspended the issue. No doubt in his own time there were collectors who were puzzled by the various dots and dashes and erasures in the lower margin which served Turner as a secret code for the identification of the changes in his "states." Much of all this was explained in the book which the late Mr. W. G. Rawlinson, a great collector of the "Liber," devoted to this subject. Since then, however, the whole history of the "Liber" has been the subject of the fullest research by Mr. A. J. Finberg, whose volume, full of the most minute and scholarly knowledge, is indispensable to every student of this important branch of Turner's art. Apart from Mr. Finberg's book the collector can study to great advantage the fine sets of the "Liber" which are included in the collections of the British Museum and the Victoria and Albert Museum. Within recent years the price for the "Liber" etchings has risen considerably, but they can now be bought in the sale-room for an average price of about £20 to £25. Ten guineas is about

the average price for the mezzotints in first states, though superb proofs of the finest and rarest will run to many times that amount. The later states, often very good, can be bought for a pound or two apiece, and within the limited range of seventy-one plates the collector is given ample scope by the variety of states and impressions. He is, of course, fortunate if his purse allows him to acquire the early engraver's proofs and the first of the published states where all the richness of the mezzotint burr remains still unworn. But anyone can acquire a complete series, in moderate impressions, for under £200, and can then enjoy the fascinating pursuit of discarding the weaker impressions and, at a little more cost, replacing them with finer and still finer proofs.

Though Sir Frank Short's work in mezzotint will be referred to later, mention must be made here of his brilliant copies of some of the Turner plates, particularly of the plates which were left unpublished in 1819. As far back as 1887, Ruskin wrote: "The pleasure of seeing such work done again, and of knowing that the worker is as happy as he is strong in it, lights the spring of the year for me more than the most cloudless sunshine on its golden hills. You are doing all these things as well as they can be done, and I believe Turner has got through Purgatory by this time, and his first stage in Paradise is at your elbow." Some of Short's best work has lain in the reproduction of drawings which were made by Turner for the

completion of the series but never engraved during his lifetime. His "Lucerne," perfect in its rendering of misty moonlight, takes its place with the very finest of the plates issued during Turner's life.

Turner's "Liber" has exercised an enormous influence in the development of landscape art of every type. As early as 1829 it won the rivalry of Constable, who secured the co-operation of David Lucas in a project for reproducing his pictures in a series of small mezzotints. Hence, in 1833, the publication of "Various Subjects of Landscape," more often known as "Constable's English Landscape," with "its professional purpose to mark the influence of light and shadow upon landscape." It was not without reason that under the vignette which closes the series was engraved *Ut umbra sic vita*. The publication, which was never a financial success, consisted finally of twenty-two plates in five numbers, issued in paper wrappers, the first containing the frontispiece and the last the vignette. Though working after Constable, Lucas remained extraordinarily individual, and produced in this series some of the richest and most luminous mezzotints of landscape that have ever been made. For brilliant rendering of Constable's atmospheric effects, such plates as "Summer Afternoon," "Noon," "The Glebe Farm," and "Headleigh Castle" could hardly be surpassed. The trial proofs have an energy and vigour and quality which make them a joy to the collector.

David Lucas, after John Constable

Salisbury Cathedral

Mezzotint. Early Working Proof

Those who can afford it will always seek these trial proofs, but the "first published states" and some of the "open letter proofs" still preserve a great part of the original massiveness and nobility of Lucas's work. Thereafter the plates wore rapidly, and are mere pale reflections of the originals when they appear in Bohn's reprint of 1855. There were other prints in which Constable and Lucas collaborated that were not included in the "English Landscape." Among these is the "Salisbury," of which only some half-dozen impressions of really fine quality are known. "Noble and desirable" Sir Frederick Wedmore called it in his "Constable and Lucas," published in 1904, a little book which first impelled the modern connoisseur to search for Lucas prints.

Sir Frank Short's work after Turner by no means completes his triumph as a mezzotint engraver. It required subtle insight as well as rare accomplishment to render the dramatic force, the imagination, the visionary gleam of Turner's work in oil and water-colour; but mezzotints outside of the "Liber" group such as "Timber Raft on the Rhine," "A Yorkshire Dell," and "A Swiss Pass" are all masterpieces of interpretation, done, like the "Liber" prints, "simply as well as they can be done." Their delicate detail and subtle suggestion of luminous colour could not have been surpassed by any of the great craftsmen who worked under the stern rule of Turner himself. De Wint, too, has found in Short an ideal

interpreter, as Constable found in Lucas. "A Road near Oxford"—and the small edition of its "first scraping" is infinitely finer than the published state, different as a Lucas trial proof from the later reprint—"Wensleydale," and the majestic "Woody Landscape," are triumphant in their rendering of De Wint's glowing colour and his large simplicity of style. Short, however, is not only the ideal interpreter in mezzotint of other artists' work, but an original worker whose own achievements stand alone in the history of mezzotint. His sensitiveness to the charm of nature, his poetic tenderness and his consummate skill of craftsmanship are shown in "The Weary Moon was in the Wane," "The West's Good-night to the East," "The Lifting Cloud," and "Moonrise, Ramsgate."

Coming to other modern workers, mention must be made of the landscapes of John Finnie, Percival Gaskell and David Waterson. Other artists, such as J. B. Pratt, Norman Hirst and Gerald Robinson have continued the tradition of the reproductive portrait. Outstanding in this group is H. Macbeth-Raeburn, who has perhaps got nearest to the dignity of the old masters, and has interpreted the portraits of Raeburn with sympathy and with great refinement of technique. A somewhat new line in the treatment of allegorical figure subjects has been struck by R. C. Peter. On the whole, however, it has been difficult for the mezzotint to vie with the perfection of photogravure and

Sir Frank Short

The Lifting Cloud

Mezzotint

other mechanical processes, and though a mezzotint executed with faithfulness and personality may surpass any mechanical work, it demands a longer and more sustained effort on the part of the artist than an etching or engraving. Hence perhaps the small space that it occupies in the field of modern graphic art.

The glass colour print, which is usually on a basis of mezzotint and had considerable vogue in the 18th century, has been rather neglected, and is often a source of mystification to its owner, who is apt to regard it as an oil-painting upon glass. Its origin dates back, in fact, almost to the discovery of mezzotint, and that the process was known and in ordinary use in 1687 is proved by a mention of the process in the second edition, published in that year, of John Smith's "The Art of Painting in Oyl." In his edition of 1700, under the heading "The Art of Back Painting Mezotincto Prints with Oyl-colours" he gives the following full description. "This Mystery consists chiefly in Pasting the Print upon a piece of glass of such a size as fits the Print. How to do this, take your Print and lay it in clean water for two days and two nights. . . . Then take it out and lay it upon two sheets of paper and cover it with two more and let it lie there a little to suck out the moisture. In the meantime take the glass your Print is to be pasted on, and set it near the Fire to warm, then take Strasburg Turpentine and put it into a Gally-Pot and warm it upon

the Fire, then take a Hog's hair brush and therewith spread over the Turpentine very smoothly on the glass. Then take the Print and lay it upon the glass . . . then with your Finger roll or rub off the Paper from the back side of the Print till you see nothing but the Print left upon the glass, and when this is done set it by to dry, and when it is dry, Varnish it over with some White Transparent Varnish that the Print may be seen through it, and then it is fit for Painting. . . . Then having prepared your Oyl Colours . . . let the back side of the transparent Print be coloured over with such colours as each particular part does require." This extract from a somewhat larger description explains clearly what a glass colour print is.

CHAPTER VI

STIPPLE ENGRAVING

CLOSELY allied with stipple is the "crayon manner" which imitates the texture of lines and tones made with chalk on a rough paper. The plate is covered with an etching ground, and this is worked over with bunches of needles, the roulette, or the *mattoir*. This method was most generally employed in France, where its invention was claimed by J. C. François, Gilles Demarteau, and Louis Bonnet, the last two of whom reproduced chalk drawings by Boucher and others with extraordinary skill. Pure stipple is a more English art, and in producing broad surfaces of tones by means of dots and not by separate lines, may be regarded with mezzotint and aquatint as a tone process. No lines are used in true stipple, but all the tones of the engraving are produced by carefully arranged and gradated groups of dots, first bitten in by acid through an etching ground and afterwards finished by dotting or flicking with the point of the stipple graver, a tool similar to the burin used for line-engraving but bent down

instead of up at the point. Though stipple is essentially an eighteenth century process, it has been shown how large a part the gradation of dots plays in the superb etched portraits of Van Dyck. The introduction of stipple as a complete process in itself followed naturally upon the crayon manner. Whether it originated on the continent or in England is uncertain; at any rate, like mezzotint, it quickly took root and flourished in this country. The general opinion is that stipple was brought over to England by William Wynne Ryland, who about 1760 worked under Boucher and Lebas, and must have known the work of François and Demarteau in the crayon manner. Appointed Engraver to the King, he opened a print shop at the Royal Exchange in Cornhill, passed through periods of prosperity and bankruptcy, and went penniless to Angelica Kauffmann. This led him again to success, and many of his prints of fancy subjects after Angelica Kauffmann and Cipriani have both charm and delicacy of style. Like Bartolozzi, he frequently printed in red ink, possibly following the idea of the *sanguine* drawings which had been so much in vogue at the time of his studentship in Paris. The new success ended in his ruin, and his career terminated on the gallows at Tyburn during a violent thunderstorm after his conviction for forging bank-notes—an end that had been strangely prophesied by young William Blake, when there was an idea of his becoming Ryland's pupil.

F. Bartolozzi, after Sir T. Lawrence

Miss Farren

Stipple Engraving

For most people, however, the word "stipple" rightly connotes Francesco Bartolozzi. The date of his birth, hitherto a matter of question, was recently proved convincingly by Mr. Selwyn Brinton's production of the certificate of his baptism in the parish of San Frediano in Florence. His birth date, September 25, 1728, was made the occasion in 1928 for centenary exhibitions of his work both at the Uffizi Gallery in Florence and—England being the land of his adoption and of the best of his life work—in the Victoria and Albert Museum. Bartolozzi, in his youth, was apprenticed to Joseph Wagner at Venice, and under him began the practice of line engraving, which indeed he never abandoned. The majority of the prints, however, which he produced after coming to England in 1764 were in crayon or stipple. Profiting by the immense vogue for the daintiness of the dotted method, he produced an enormous series of plates, particularly after Angelica Kauffmann and his Florentine friend Cipriani, the painter, who had preceded him to England. Over two thousand plates bear the name of Bartolozzi as their engraver, and there can be little doubt that much of the work was done by brilliant pupils who paid high premiums for instruction in his atelier. It is this fact which led to much inferior work being issued with his signature, with the result that his reputation now has somewhat declined. At his best he produced outstanding work marked by great subtlety in the

delicate gradation of tones. Some of his serious portraits are after Reynolds, such as the "Lady Elizabeth Foster" and "Lady Smythe and Children," and his portraits of "Angelica Kauffmann," "Dr. Blair" and "William Pitt" are works of high distinction. Of special importance is his magnificent full-length of "Elizabeth Farren," the actress, so tall and graceful with her large muff. Bartolozzi's prints were produced in large editions, and consequently there is great variety in the quality of the impressions. Owing to his high reputation numbers of imitative plates were fraudulently produced, many of them with the name of "Bartolotti" as the engraver. At the foundation of the Royal Academy of Arts in 1769, he was one of the first members, and in 1802 he left England to become Director of the National Academy at Lisbon, where he died in 1815. Except in the case of brilliant impressions of some outstanding prints, such as the "Elizabeth Farren," the prices for Bartolozzi's prints have steadily declined, and the collector who is interested in stipple can nowadays form a Bartolozzi collection for a quite moderate outlay.

Of Bartolozzi's pupils the most noteworthy are P. W. Tomkins, J. K. Sherwin, Charles Knight, L. Schiavonetti and T. Cheeseman. Tomkins produced some charming prints of children at play, and his domestic subjects, such as "Morning Employments," after Bunbury, and the pair entitled "Morning" and "Evening" may also be

Francis Wheatley

Strawberrys, scarlet Strawberrys!

Stipple Engraving

noted. Charles Knight, though he did some good portraits, such as the "Duchess of York," after Beechey, is chiefly notable as having done the etched work in the greater part of Bartolozzi's fine portrait of Miss Farren. Schiavonetti won his chief claim to fame by his direction of the famous series of the "Cries of London," after Wheatley, the publication of which began in 1793. Though these are often brilliant in monochrome, they win their greatest popularity when in colour, and in this connection will be referred to later.

The mass of contemporary work in stipple, though much of it is of fine quality, does not call for detailed notice. Such popular painters as Wheatley, Singleton, Cosway and Bigg were all quick to notice the attractiveness of stipple, and sought interpreters for their work. Anthony Cardon, John Condé, Caroline Watson and J. G. Facius are all names which appear under prints of merit. Condé's "Mrs. Fitz-Herbert," after Cosway, has considerable attraction, as also have the ten portraits that make up Charles Wilkin's "Series of Portraits of Ladies of Rank and Fashion." Thomas Gaugain was a prolific craftsman, and engraved portraits and subject pieces after many prominent painters of his day. Among valuable prints by him are the "Airing in Hyde Park," after Edward Dayes, and "Dancing Dogs" and "Guinea Pigs," after Morland. Outstanding, however, among the later stipple engravers of the

period come John Jones, J. R. Smith and William Ward.

John Jones has already been mentioned as a master of mezzotint, and he handled stipple with an equal amount of artistic skill. His charming portrait of "Emma, Lady Hamilton," the head overshadowed by the wide-brimmed hat which lends so much attraction to the female portraits of this time, is a beautiful example of stipple used to produce a remarkable delicacy of tone. John Raphael Smith was supreme in mezzotint, and takes a high place in stipple with his fancy portraits and subject prints. A consummate craftsman, with a keen sympathy for anecdote and sentiment, he produced numerous prints after George Morland, among them the "Story of Letitia," in six plates, published in 1786, the "Tavern Door," "Delia in Town," and "Delia in the Country." From his own light heart and his own spirited designs he produced plates that still make an immediate appeal, such as "What you Will," "Serena and Flirtilla," and "Thoughts on a Single Life." William Ward was the author of many fancy portraits and figure subjects that, like Smith's work, have the perennial appeal of sparkling feminine charm, among them the "Soliloquy," "Alinda," "Lucy of Leinster," the "Cyprian Votary" and the "Musing Charmer." Among other attractive works of his are the "Thoughts on Matrimony," after

William Ward

Alinda

Stipple Engraving

J. R. Smith, and "The First Pledge of Love," after George Morland.

We have only to look at such plates as William Ward's "Louisa," J. R. Smith's "Narcissa," or the work of Charles Wilkin and Caroline Watson, to understand the immense popularity of a method that was so light and flexible, so easy in its rendering of superficial charm and prettiness. Where the dining-room calls for mezzotints, stipple engravings, particularly in colour, seem made by nature as the adornments of my lady's boudoir. When used in its purity, the very simplicity of stipple lent it an added grace, but when etching, mezzotint, stipple and sometimes aquatint were combined in one plate, the extinction of the art became inevitable. One of the offenders who is most excusable is William Walker, and his portrait of "Robert Burns," done in conjunction with Samuel Cousins, is by no means an unimportant work. Cousins himself, though a fine mezzotint engraver, frequently ruined his work by a mechanical use of stipple in the completion of his mezzotint portraits.

In these post-Cézanne days the art of stipple is perhaps too light and delicate ever to be attempted again. All the more should the collector seize the opportunities, rapidly becoming rarer, of securing the finest work of the eighteenth century. Good stipple prints can still be bought for moderate sums, particularly when in monochrome. When printed in colours—and we shall

come to the colour-print later—they require a much higher ransom. There are many people who, when faced with the same print in colour and in monochrome, will fall at first under the spell of colour, and will realise later that the monochrome gives more lasting satisfaction. Does not the reason why the monochrome print, and especially etching, is so popular, lie in the fact that its owner quite sub-consciously clothes it in the colour that his own imagination lends ?

CHAPTER VII

AQUATINT ENGRAVING

THE term "aquatint engraving" is strictly incorrect, for aquatint is a tone process in which the acid bath is employed. The rather curious name, which in its older form was "aquatinta," means a wash, or water tint, and a single glance at an aquatint print will show its appositeness, for the aquatint process results in flat tones very similar to monochrome washes. The gradation of tones is obtained by "stopping out," and great skill and care in biting is necessary to produce blending. The general principle of aquatint is to cover the plate with fine specks of an acid-resisting substance, such as resin, and the acid then bites into the tiny interstices between the specks, and results in a finely grained even tone. There are several methods of laying the aquatint ground, but the two most frequently employed are the "dust ground" and the "spirit ground." For the first, finely powdered resin or asphaltum is placed in a large wooden box, and a fan is rapidly revolved inside it, so that the dust is stirred into violent motion. Then the

carefully cleaned plate is put into the box, and the dust falls evenly on it, the length of time it remains in the box regulating the closeness of the grain. Then the plate is taken out and heated gently, so as just to melt the resin, which is then "fixed." For the "spirit ground," resin is dissolved in alcohol, and the solution is poured evenly over the plate. The spirit evaporates rapidly, leaving the water and resin, and the resin draws together in little islands, leaving the copper clear in between. Naturally, with either ground, the length of immersion in acid controls the depth of tone, and the shapes are obtained by the edges of the stopping-out varnish. Very often etched lines are used as outlines, but this is not essential.

It is impossible definitely to assign the invention of aquatint to any single artist. Between 1750 and 1780 Jean Baptiste le Prince, Jean Claude Richard de St. Non, and Per Gustav Floding were all experimenting with the process, and Ploos van Amstel of Amsterdam was producing coloured reproductions of Dutch paintings by some closely allied method, the details of which are still obscure. Le Prince, however, was the most consistently successful, and is usually regarded as the originator, although the Victoria and Albert Museum possesses a print signed G. Q., which was made probably before Le Prince was born, and may be taken as one of the early "documents" of the aquatint process. Le

Prince was born in Metz in 1734, and studied for some time under François Boucher, and in the course of a chequered life he spent some years in Russia. He usually issued his plates in sets of six, and did not by any means confine himself to aquatint; his "Divers Habillements des Femmes de Moscovie," for example, is in pure etching. Two aquatint sets are "Suite d'Habillements de Diverses Nations" and "Suite de Coiffures dessinées d'après nature," both published in 1768. Among his single plates are "La Danse Russe," "La Lampe Polonaise" and "Les Nouvellistes."

Very shortly after its invention, the aquatint process was used extensively for printing in colour, and to this development we shall refer in the following chapter.

The Hon. Charles Greville learnt the secret of aquatint engraving from J. B. Le Prince, and passed it on to Paul Sandby, R.A. (1725–1809). Sandby is often called "the father of English water-colour," and he did not at first practise as an engraver, but his interest in the new process is readily understandable if it be recalled that at this time a water-colour painting was still a "tinted drawing," that is, the drawing was first completed in flat washes of monochrome, and the local colour was laid on afterwards. Hence the adaptability of aquatint for the reproduction of water-colour drawings, the finished aquatint being practically identical with the earlier stage of the drawing, before the addition of colour.

Sandby's earliest efforts in engraving were imitations of Indian ink drawings, and in 1775 he published a series of plates entitled "Twelve Views in Aquatinta from drawings taken on the spot in South Wales." He followed these up with further sets of Welsh views, and in 1776 published four "Views of Warwick Castle" and "Five Views of Windsor Castle." Other sets are "Eleven Views of Miletus, Troas, Athens, etc. after W. Pars," "Ten Views of Camps in Hyde Park and Blackheath" and "Two Views of St. Augustine's, Canterbury." Sandby's debt to Le Prince was in reality for little more than the fundamental idea of the aquatint process, for he invented the spirit ground and employed it exclusively. This accounts for the apparent contradiction between his description of "a mode of imitating drawings on copper plates discovered by P. Sandby, R.A., in the year 1776, to which he gave the name of Aquatinta," and the passage in a letter written in 1775 to John Constable: "I perceive you have been trying at Le Prince's Secret. Know my good Friend *I* got a key to it and am perfect Master of it, you will perceive by the enclosed first trials of mine I soon made a progress in it. I have already done 24 Views in Wales and 4 large Warwicks which I will send you soon as they are published. I own no hobby horse in the world would suit me equal to this; indeed, I have rid so closely these four months past I have scarcely done anything else, the work is so delightful and easy to me."

F. Jukes, after W. Williams
Matrimony
Aquatint

Aquatint never became the rival of stipple for the type of print that was popular at the period, although two plates aquatinted by Francis Jukes after W. Williams, "Courtship" and "Matrimony," show what might have been done with the new process. In France the use of aquatint was largely developed by artists such as Debucourt and Janinet, but as their work was mainly in colour it is dealt with in a later chapter on Colour Prints. In England aquatint rapidly settled down to an almost exclusive function of illustrating the huge books on every conceivable subject which enjoyed an immense popularity for many years. The originator of this series of illustrated publications was Rudolph Ackermann, who holds in consequence a very important place in the history of aquatint. It may be mentioned here that these books have been later broken up as a rule for the sake of the plates, so that the bibliophile has difficulty in obtaining an intact copy, while the print-collector has an almost unlimited range of subjects among which to make his choice. Ackermann, who was born in Germany in 1764, came to London to practise his trade of carriage-building, but in 1795 he opened a print-shop in the Strand. In the following year he moved to 101 Strand, where his shop was known as "The Repository of Arts." Here he rapidly built up an enormous business, the success of his projects being to a large extent due to the certainty with which he picked out the best

artists and engravers for his purpose. Rowlandson did an immense amount of work for him, and indeed but for Ackermann's supervision Rowlandson would probably not have produced a quarter of the serious work that he did, for the companionship of men such as Gillray and Bunbury and the attractions of the streets and the gaming-houses, were constantly luring the artist into further dissipations. Others who provided Ackermann with designs were Nash, Pyne, Pugin, Westall, Mackenzie and Fielding, and his principal aquatint engravers were T. Malton, J. C. Stadler and T. Sutherland. Almost all the prints were in colour, but were nevertheless not strictly "colour prints." As a rule, two colours only were used, a blue for the sky, and a bistre or black, or occasionally a green, for foreground and landscape. The printing was done *à la poupée*, and there was never any over-printing of colour, for each print was further coloured by hand by the army of assistants whom Ackermann kept for the purpose. The colouring of prints was a regular industry, and both Turner and Girtin passed their apprenticeship in tinting prints for Dayes, Malton and J. R. Smith. The artist would first make his design, in some cases etching the outline, as was Rowlandson's usual habit, and then hand it over to the aquatint engraver. A print of the finished plate was then returned to the artist, who carefully coloured it. This coloured version served as a model for the similar tinting of all the prints that were needed

for an edition. The amount of colour employed varies considerably, and the standard of work was amazingly high.

Ackermann's first great publication was "The Microcosm of London, or London in Miniature, the architecture by A. Pugin, the Manners and Customs by Thomas Rowlandson," and was issued in 1808, in monthly parts. The book has a perennial interest for its plates of buildings no longer in existence, such as the India House, the King's Bench Prison and Brooks' Subscription House. The next venture was "The History of the Abbey Church of St. Peter's, Westminster," and was not so successful as the first publication, though it was greatly cherished by Ackermann himself. In 1814 and 1815, however, there appeared two immensely popular books, "The History of the University of Oxford" and "The History of the University of Cambridge." Pugin and Nash were among those who made the drawings, and the engraving, for which F. C. Lewis and J. C. Stadler, among others, were responsible, is of a standard to match the drawings. After these came in 1816 a "History of the Colleges," describing the great public schools. Not that these publications by any means exhausted the activities of Ackermann, for at the same time there poured forth a stream of books on various subjects, while the monthly magazine, the "Repository," which first appeared in 1809, presented a profusely illustrated

potpourri of everything under the sun, under the comprehensive title of the "Repository of Arts, Literature, Commerce, Manufacture, Fashions and Politics."

It is among these illustrations in coloured aquatint that the collectors of restricted means can find one of his happiest hunting-grounds. Collections can be formed of naval prints, sporting prints (though these are becoming expensive), prints of natural history, prints of botany, prints of foreign travel, prints of costume, prints of English scenery, theatre prints, Aeronautica, Americana, and a host of other subjects. These few brief indications of what may be looked for are all that space will permit.

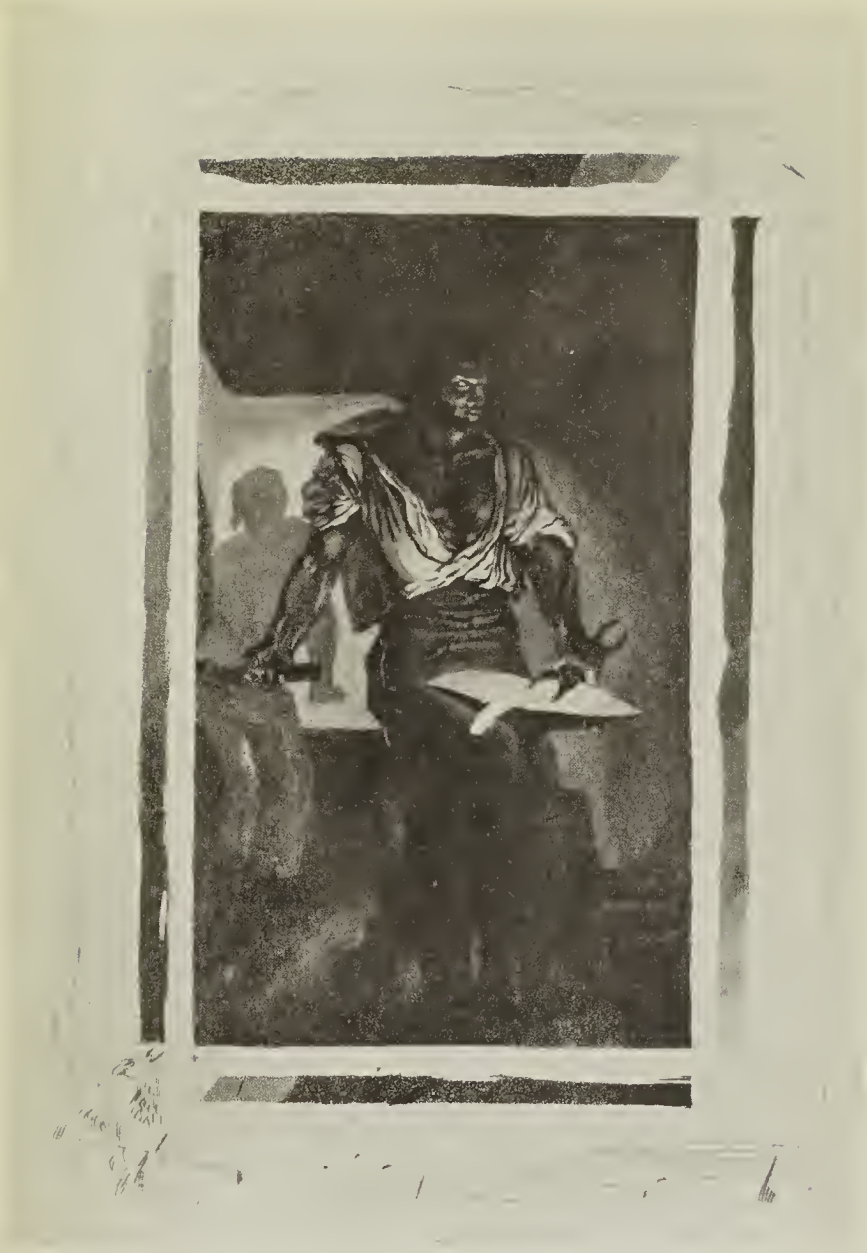
An interesting field is that of the drawing-books which were produced by eminent water-colour painters to give instruction in this most fashionable accomplishment. At a time when any young lady's education was considered sadly neglected if she could not draw in water-colours, and when the majority of artists in this medium gained the bulk of their livelihood through teaching, these books were assured of a steady success. Among the most interesting are "A Treatise on Landscape Painting and Effect in Water Colours" and "The Young Artist's Companion," by David Cox, "The Young Painter's Maulstick," by James Malton, "A Series of Easy Lessons in Landscape Drawing," by Samuel Prout, and "Precepts for Design in Landscape" and "Treatise on

the Principles of Landscape Design," by John Varley.

In the domain of English topography there is "A Picturesque Tour through the Cities of London and Westminster," in 1792, by Thomas Malton, and the contemporary "Picturesque and Descriptive Views of the City of Dublin," by James Malton; William Havell's "A Series of Picturesque Views of the River Thames," 1823; the "Picturesque Tour of the River Thames," published by Ackermann, the artists being W. Westall and S. Owen; John Hassell's "Picturesque Guide to Bath," and "Picturesque Rides and Walks . . . round the British Metropolis" and the fine "Cambria Depicta" of Edward Pugh. But by far the best book dealing with English scenery is "A Voyage around Great Britain . . . with a series of views . . . drawn and engraved by William Daniell, A.R.A.," comprising eight volumes with a total of three hundred and eight plates. The plates are excellent in design and draughtsmanship, and the colouring is subdued and delicate. This publication may be regarded as the high water mark of attainment in English aquatint. Then there is "A Picturesque Tour of the English Lakes," illustrated by Fielding and Walton, and many others too numerous to mention.

The intense interest in foreign scenery which was aroused by the varying fortunes of the Napoleonic Wars was responsible for the appear-

ance of a large number of books depicting scenes abroad. One of the most interesting is "A Selection of Twenty of the Most Picturesque Views in Paris," by Thomas Girtin, aquatinted by F. C. Lewis among others. The aquatints are a little dull, and fail to render the vitality of Girtin's wash drawings or his tinted proofs, which served as a model; but Girtin's etchings, which have already been mentioned, make the series one of outstanding significance. Scarcely on the same level, but nevertheless desirable, is "Views of Versailles, Paris and St. Denis," with illustrations by J. C. Nattes, while George Heriot's "Picturesque Tour through the Pyrenean Mountains," and J. Hardy's "Tour of the High Pyrenees," contain some of the very best aquatint plates of this description. In addition to numerous volumes dealing with European countries, there are very many books illustrating the East. Henry Salt's "Twenty-four views in St. Helena and Egypt," James Wathen's "Voyage to Madras and China," W. J. Burchell's "Travels in the Interior of Southern Africa," and James Justinian Morier's "Journey through Persia to Constantinople" and "Second Journey through Persia," are typical examples of their kind. The books on India form an important section in themselves, and the bulk of them were published by Edward Orme, after Ackermann the most successful publisher of the period. Among his publications are "Oriental Scenery" and "A Picturesque Voyage



Eugène Delacroix

Le Forgeron

Aquatint

to India by way of China," the drawings for which were finished by William and Thomas Daniell. Ackermann published "A Picturesque Tour along the Rivers Ganges and Jumna," by C. R. Forrest, and there are dozens of other books with plates of more or less interest. Books on China poured forth after Lord Macartney's embassy in 1792, one of the most important of which is the "Journal of the Proceedings of the late Embassy to China," 1817, by Sir Henry Ellis. Java, South America, North America, the West Indies and Australia are also represented in the illustrated publications of the time, so that the collector has a world-wide field before him.

Only a very few have been mentioned of the books relating to English Topography and Foreign Travel, and there are equally large numbers of publications dealing with the various subjects mentioned above, as well as many others. However, enough has perhaps been said to indicate the possibilities of exploration among the aquatints of the early nineteenth century.

Artists have never looked with much favour upon aquatint as a medium for expressing their original designs, though Turner's first project of producing the "Liber Studiorum" in aquatint resulted in the beautiful "Bridge and Goats." The only artists who used it at all extensively were Goya in Spain and Delacroix in France. Delacroix did not produce many aquatints, but

"Le Forgeron" is a masterpiece, and is particularly interesting owing to the experimental bitings which appear in the margin. Francisco Goya (1746–1828) is the great master of mixed aquatint; as a rule a great deal of etching appears in his plates, but in spite of the vigour and certainty of his draughtsmanship, his plates are essentially designed in tone. Goya is one of the world's great artists, although he is so completely Spanish in outlook as to be understood with difficulty by a race which has never been forced into the dark ways of treachery and cunning by the repressive machinery of an Inquisition. His vivid and *macabre* imagination, his merciless knowledge of the folly and cruelty of mankind and his amazing skill in expressing the one and recording the other would make his prints unbearable if it were not for the strange beauty with which he manages to invest the most savage scenes. Goya's earliest work in aquatint was the seventy-two plates of "Los Caprichos," satires on the corruption of Church, State and Court. There have been several subsequent impressions from the plates, the last being in 1892. Two of the series only are in pure aquatint, No. 39, "Asta su Abuelo" and No. 82, "Por que fue sensible," which is one of Goya's finest plates. The eighteen plates of the "Proverbios" are in the same strain, but the satire is rather more obscure. The series called "Desastres de la Guerra" was etched at the time of the French

Sir Frank Short

The New Moon

Aquatint

occupation, but was not published until 1863. These prints are the most horrible indictment of War that has ever been conceived; each plate is a nightmare of human agony. Aquatint is not used extensively in this series, and twenty-eight of the plates are in pure etching. Finally, there is the series of thirty-three plates of the "Tauromaquia," in which Goya abandoned satire completely. No longer disturbed by *saeva indignatio*, he was able to design these plates with a single mind, and the result is a series of marvellous compositions, brilliant in conception and execution, and showing once for all what can be done with aquatint. Perhaps the best plate is "Martincho vuelca un toro en la plaza de Madrid," superb in its treatment of the wide empty spaces.

Aquatint is now slowly returning into favour, and an increasing number of artists are using it for their original designs. William Strang produced thirty plates as illustrations to Kipling, employing Goya's mixed process of etching and aquatint, and a further thirty illustrations to "Don Quixote." "The Cortes of Death" is one of the most remarkable, and shows how strictly he subordinated aquatint to the etched line. Sir Frank Short has been a pioneer in this medium, as well as in mezzotint, for he is almost the first to have realised that pure aquatint produces a beautiful transparent luminosity of tone, attainable by no other method, which makes it unrivalled for landscape effects, especially for those involving

wide stretches of sky veiled in clouds or mist. "A Span of Old Battersea Bridge" and "Sunrise o'er Whitby Scaur" are famous plates, and almost equally beautiful are "Morning Haze, Chichester Harbour," "The Curfew" and "The Silver Tide."

Percival Gaskell has done some very attractive plates, notably "The Heron's Pool" and "The Bait Diggers," and "The Bridge, Staithes," by W. Westley Manning is another beautiful print. C. H. Baskett is one of the few who seem really to prefer aquatint to other methods, and he has produced a large number of plates, among them "Portsmouth Dockyard," "Spritsail Barges," "Heybridge Marshes" and "The Dawn Wind." Mrs. Laura Knight's work is very much in the Goya tradition, as may be seen from "Bank Holiday," and among other attractive plates may be mentioned "The Storm Cloud," by L. R. Squirrell, "St. Ives under Snow," by Alfred Hartley, "Pilsey, Evening," by Hubert Schroder and "Bishop Hill, Gloucester," by Nathaniel Sparks.

CHAPTER VIII

COLOUR PRINTS

COLOUR printing can be divided into printing from wood, from metal and from stone. Printing from wood-blocks is by far the oldest method, and its beginnings lie in the fifteenth century, when the early producers of printed books attempted to emulate the gay effects of their rivals the illuminators by printing at least their initial letters in a different colour. Even for this simple achievement two blocks would be necessary, one printing in black ink all but the part destined to assume another hue, and the second printing that part alone. The correspondence between the two impressions, which is known as the "register" was—and is—obtained by means of fine points placed so that the paper will always be pierced at the same place. One of the very earliest books printed in more than one colour is the Liturgical Psalter printed by Fust and Schoeffer at Mainz in 1457, in which the capital letters are in blue and red, and Erhard Ratdolt, the Augsburg printer, who set up a press in Venice in 1476, produced books containing

woodcuts in three or four colours. It will be understood that for every additional colour used a separate block is required. In England the earliest example of colour printing, which is also the most ambitious effort of the fifteenth century, is that section of the "Book of St. Albans" which deals with coat armour. Here the heraldic shields are printed in their proper colours, mainly blue, red, yellow and green, while the more exceptional colours are added by hand.

There does not seem to have been much attempt at printing isolated woodcuts in colour, although perhaps experiments were made with some religious cuts. One of these, which is considered the oldest colour woodcut in existence, is a print of St. Anthony of Padua, coloured in violet, green, grey and red, and is perhaps Spanish in origin.

It is not necessary to look to the East for the origin of colour printing. The beautiful Japanese prints date from the eighteenth century, and although they may have had ancestors in Japan, and certainly had in China forerunners of much earlier date, yet the evolution from printing in one colour is so simple and natural that there is no reason to suppose it was not a spontaneous development in Europe.

No progress, however, was made with colour-printing on the lines of the early books. Possibly the printers felt that it was hopeless to compete with the brilliant hand-coloured woodcuts. At all events, in the sixteenth century colour-printing

took a new form, the so-called "chiaroscuro" prints. These have already been mentioned in Chapter I, but in addition to Ugo da Carpi and Lucas Cranach, mention must be made of their contemporaries, Hans Baldung, Jost de Negker, who for long was credited with the invention of the process, and Albrecht Altdorfer, whose "Our Lady of Ratisbon," printed in five tones, is the finest of the early German chiaroscuro cuts. There appears to be no doubt that occasionally a metal plate was used for the outline block and the wood-blocks were used only for the colour impressions, a method which was used later by Kirkall and Baxter. The aim of a chiaroscuro woodcut was not to give a realistic representation in colours, but to indicate the light and shade by means of broad masses of colour, instead of by close lines of shading or cross-hatching as in the ordinary type of print. The range of colours employed was small, comprising only olive green, brown, dark-red, pale yellow and sepia, so that the finished print has a sombre neutral effect. It was, of course, an excellent method of reproducing wash drawings almost in facsimile.

Chiaroscuro printing revived in the eighteenth century, but in the interval it did not altogether die out. Abraham Bloemaert (1564–1658) did some very fine prints in this manner, using an etched plate for the first outline, and Louis Businck, a French engraver, was producing chiaroscuros about 1623, while Bartolomeo Coriolano

was working in Bologna between 1630 and 1647. One of the most important of the eighteenth century chiaroscurists was Edward Kirkall, who was also the first Englishman to practise in this manner. As a rule, he copied Italian pictures, and printed his first impression from a metal plate worked in mezzotint, adding the tones from wood-blocks. A particularly interesting print is "Aeneas carrying his Father out of the flames of Troy," after Raphael, which was also printed in chiaroscuro by Ugo da Carpi. The British Museum has an impression taken from the mezzotint plate, as well as another impression with the colours superimposed. Most of Kirkall's prints were produced between 1721 and 1724. His work was imitated in France by Vincent Le Sueur (1691–1764), though the mezzotint plate was not employed, the outline being taken from an etched plate. Arthur Pond and Charles Knapton published a large number of chiaroscuros between 1730 and 1740, copying Old Master pictures and drawings, for it does not seem to have occurred to any of the chiaroscurists of this period to reproduce their original designs.

A much more original chiaroscurist was John Baptist Jackson, who was born in 1701. He studied under Kirkall in London, and then in Paris under Papillon, after which he went to Venice, where he worked from 1738 to 1745. In 1745 he published a volume of chiaroscuros in the usual manner after Titian, Tintoretto and

Antonio Fantuzzi, after Parmigiano
A Man seated in a Wood
Chiaroscuro Wood Engraving

Veronese. In 1746 he returned to England, and then conceived his idea of producing wall-papers printed in colours. He opened a manufactory at Battersea, and in 1754 published his "Essay on the Invention of Engraving and Printing in Chiaro Oscuro," illustrating it with four pictures of classical statues in ordinary chiaroscuro and four of "Buildings and Vegetables" printed in their natural colours. The object of the Essay was really to advertise his wall-hangings, and he claims that "every Bird that flies, every Figure that moves upon the surface of the Earth from the insect to the human; and every Vegetable that springs from the ground, whatever is of Art or Nature, may be introduced into this Design of fitting up and furnishing Rooms." Horace Walpole's famous house at Strawberry Hill was hung throughout with Jackson's papers. Walpole writes in a letter of 1753: "a little parlour hung with a stone-colour Gothic paper and Jackson's Venetian prints, which I never could endure while they pretended, infamous as they are, to be after Titian, etc., but when I gave them this air of barbarous bas-reliefs they succeeded to a miracle." Jackson's one-time master, Papillon, indignantly repudiated Jackson's claim to have invented wall-papers coloured in chiaroscuro, and maintained that the first person to invent what he called "tapestry papers" was his own father, who placed them on the market in Paris about 1688, while before 1750 Lefèvre, Blondel, Panseron

and others were all selling coloured wall-papers in Paris.

The last of the chiaroscuro engravers was an amateur called John Skippe, who published two sets of prints in this manner in 1781. They are of the usual type, after the Old Masters, particularly Parmegiano, and are very well done. After Skippe's time there was no further attempt at chiaroscuro printing, until, in 1822, William Savage published "Practical Hints on Decorative Printing," in which the illustrations were in chiaroscuro as well as in straightforward colour-printing. The chief importance of Savage is that he paved the way for the work of George Baxter.

Colour-printing from metal plates was not attempted until fairly late in the seventeenth century, when Hercules Seghers (1625–1679), a friend of Rembrandt, produced some etchings printed in a single colour. His work, however, cannot be regarded as true colour-printing, and the pioneer in this method was Johannes Teyler, of Nymegen in Holland, an engineer by profession. His method of printing is technically known as *à la poupée;* that is, the whole plate was inked over at once with the required colours, so that the finished result was obtained from a single printing. This method is obviously difficult and laborious, and does not lend itself to rapid multiplication of impressions, for the colouring, which must constantly be renewed, requires the hand of the

artist himself, and the print usually has to be finished by hand. All that is left of Teyler's work is a very rare book published about 1670 at Amsterdam, containing colour prints of birds, animals, landscapes and architectural subjects.

The landmark in colour-printing was the invention of what is really the forerunner of the modern "three-colour process" by Jacob Christoph Le Blon (1667–1741). This method, which was the anticipation of all modern mechanical colour-reproductive processes, was based on Sir Isaac Newton's recently discovered principle of the composition of the colours in the spectrum. Newton's theory was that there are seven primary colours, combinations of which will produce any other colour, but subsequently the seven colours were reduced to three: red, yellow and blue. Le Blon's method was to resolve the picture into its component parts of red, yellow and blue; to colour three plates carefully, and to print each colour on top of the other. White was produced by leaving the paper untouched, and black by the super-printing of all three plates. Le Blon worked with mezzotint plates, which gave a richer gradation of tone than the line engravings used by Teyler, and are especially good for rendering the half-tones.

Le Blon, who was born at Frankfort-on-Main and studied in Zurich and Rome, made his first experiments at Amsterdam and the Hague. In 1719 he came to London, and managed to enlist

the patronage of Colonel Sir John Guise and Lord Perceval. Backed by these supporters, he took out a patent, and proceeded to form a company for the reproduction of pictures, with himself as technical director. "The Picture Office," as it was called, flourished for a time, but soon Le Blon's mismanagement and extravagance involved it in bankruptcy. At this crisis, in 1722, he published a book revealing for the first time the secret of his process, "Coloritto, or the Harmony of Colouring in Painting." Then, after an interval of portrait painting, he succeeded in forming another company for the manufacture of tapestries at Mulberry Ground, Chelsea. In 1727 he took out a patent for "The Art of Weaving Tapestry in the Loom," but this venture also was destined to failure, and in 1732 he fled to Holland. All his work of any importance is comprised in some fifty large plates, all reproductions of pictures, which are among the marvels of colour-printing. These prints are now extremely rare, and it is quite possible that many of them were varnished for protection, and being then mistaken for oil paintings, are now holding a place of honour in many a provincial drawing-room. After Le Blon's death his process gradually lapsed into oblivion, though carried on for a time by his pupil, Jacques Gautier Dagoty. Dagoty claimed the invention for himself, but the only difference between his method and that of Le Blon is that he used a fourth plate, for printing the black. None of

Dagoty's prints are of great interest or merit, and Carlo Lasinio, who went on with the process after Dagoty's death, produced a good deal of laborious but careless work.

The great vogue of the colour-print dawned at the end of the eighteenth century, under the impetus of the charming mezzotints and stipples of the period. Nearly every successful print was later reproduced in colours, and these were always printed from a single plate, the coloured inks being carefully applied to the different parts of the plate in the manner first adopted by Johannes Teyler. As a rule, finishing touches were added by hand, and minute inspection is necessary to decide whether a print is genuinely printed in colours or whether it is entirely tinted afterwards. It should be fairly easy to see whether the dots and lines of the engraved work are actually printed in a coloured ink. If they show black through the colour, or if the white spaces between dots and lines are covered with a wash of colour, then the colouring has been applied afterwards, but it must be remembered that even a true colour-print will show touches of hand-tinting. The majority of the prints which were poured forth in such immense quantities were in stipple, for mezzotint, though producing very beautiful results, is not so satisfactory in that the delicately engraved plate cannot stand the frequent applications of colour. In the cases where a mezzotint print was used for printing in colour the impression

was taken from an already slightly worn plate, and consequently only a very few really good prints could be obtained before the plate became so worn that the effect was very thin. The beauty of some of the colour mezzotints by W. Ward, after Morland, is only equalled by their rarity. Among the best are "The Turnpike Gate," "Inside of a Country Ale-house," "First of September—Morning," "The Pledge of Love," and "Blind Man's Buff," while by J. R. Smith there are "The Return from Market" and "Feeding the Pigs." Among the mezzotint portraits in colour are "Lady Hamilton as Nature," by J. R. Smith after Romney, and "Mrs. Beresford," by John Jones, also after Romney, while the only one after Gainsborough is the rare "Duchess of Devonshire" by W. W. Barney. The Hoppner prints are more numerous, and very valuable; "Mrs. Bouverie" and "Sophia Western," by J. R. Smith, "Juvenile Retirement," by James Ward, "Mrs. Benwell," by William Ward, "Mrs. Jordan as 'Hippolyta'," by John Jones, "Mrs. Whitbread," by S. W. Reynolds, and many others.

Stipple, however, has a much wider range. Most of the Bartolozzi prints after Angelica Kauffmann and Cipriani were also printed in colours, and there is a vast range of stipple portraits in colour. Often these are very poor, with crude colouring carelessly applied, but there are very many lovely things, such as the best of the Reynolds, Romney and Lawrence prints. "Jane,

Countess of Harrington, with her children," by Bartolozzi, after Reynolds, together with "Lady Smyth," fetched £360 the pair at the sale in March, 1929, of Baron van Zuylen's collection. J. R. Smith's original print "Narcissa" fetched £72 at the same sale, and "The Alpine Traveller," by J. Ward, after Northcote, attained £120. John Downman's dainty portraits make beautiful colour-prints, especially "Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire," by Bartolozzi, and there are some charming stipples after Cosway. The stipples after Morland are not so numerous as the mezzotints, but there are plenty of them none the less, notably "Dancing Dogs," by Gaugain, and "Industry" and "Idleness," by Knight. Wheatley's "Cries of London" series, which have already been referred to, still retain their immense popularity when printed in colours, and the collector must be very much on his guard with these prints, for none are so frequently faked to-day. Colour-prints after Henry Singleton, though very sentimental in their appeal, command a high price in the auction room, especially "The Ale-house Door" and "The Farmyard," by Nutter. It is impossible to give anything approaching an adequate idea of the possibilities among the colour mezzotints and colour stipples of the period, and it will be enough to repeat that nearly all the most popular prints in monochrome were reproduced in colours, and that these prints in the present craze for colour-prints of all descriptions,

fetch, in a good impression, prices which are far beyond the average collector. Among the English colour aquatints which are true colour-prints throughout are Francis Jukes's "Courtship" and "Matrimony," after Williams, which, at Baron van Zuylen's sale, fetched £280 the pair.

The history of French colour-prints begins in 1737, when Le Blon obtained from Louis XV a privilege for the production of prints by his original process. After the extinction of his method in the hands of the Gautier Dagoty family, colour-printing was applied to prints in the *manière de crayon* and *manière de pastel*, invented respectively by J. C. François and Gilles Demarteau, and by Louis Marin Bonnet. These processes, which are substantially identical, have already been mentioned in the chapter on Stipple. Demarteau never attempted a true colour-print, and produced only imitations of drawings in red and black chalk, but Bonnet (1743-1793) published prints in several colours, taken from a corresponding number of plates. Both Demarteau and Bonnet reproduced large numbers of the drawings of Boucher, and Bonnet was particularly successful with his prints after Boucher's pastels. Among his most important plates are the "Tête de Flore," for which eight or nine plates were used, and the "Réveil de Vénus." It should be noted that his prints are often signed "Marin." He also invented a method of printing in gold, and

often added a gold border to his prints in imitation of a frame.

The real genius of the French colour-print, however, expressed itself in the medium of aquatint. This was, in France, a complicated process, involving the use of as many as eight or nine different plates, and very often the grain of the ground was attained, not by means of resin, but by the use of a number of little roulettes and mattoirs. François Janinet was one of the most prolific and skilful aquatinters, and his prints after Boucher, Fragonard, Lavreince and others are amazing examples of patient craftsmanship. To the delicate charm of the designs from which he worked, he added a subtle colour sense of his own, and the perennial popularity of his prints is proved by the enormous prices which they fetch to-day. One of his best-known prints is the portrait of "Marie Antoinette d'Autriche" which fetched £450 at Baron van Zuylen's sale at Sotheby's, but the most attractive are certainly those after Lavreince. "L'Aveu Difficile," "La Comparaison" and "L'Indiscretion" are among the most famous colour-prints in the world, and at Baron van Zuylen's sale went for £720, £1,675, and £840 respectively. The very rare "La Joueuse de Guitare" fetched £2,500 at the same sale. Other delightful prints are "Ha! le joli petit chien," "Le déjeuner anglais," "Ah! laisse moi donc voir," all after Lavreince, and "Mademoiselle du T. . . . ," after Lemoine.

Louis Philibert Debucourt, however, is undoubtedly the greatest of the French engravers in colour. His technical skill was equal to that of Janinet, and he far surpassed him in artistic talent, since he always engraved from his own designs. His charming prints are the most penetrating and faithful pictures that we possess of pre-Revolution French society dancing and flirting its way down the primrose path to the guillotine. "La Promenade Publique" and "La Promenade de la Galerie du Palais Royal," two of his masterpieces, show the exquisitely dressed, careless throng of the *haut monde* strolling in the sunshine, on a volcano, as it proved, and "Les Deux Baisers," with the young wife giving her hand to the artist behind the back of her old husband, is an epitome of the manners and morals of an epoch. "Les Deux Baisers" fetched £2,000 at Sotheby's, and two charming prints, "Le Menuet de la Mariée" and "La Noce au Château" went for £700. Then there are "La Rose" and "La Main," "L'Oiseau Ranimée," whose rarity commanded £1,350, "Les Adieux du Matin," "Le Compliment ou la Matinée du jour de l'An" and "Les Bouquets ou la Fête de la Grand'maman," the possession of any of which would make the collector happy for life. Debucourt's activities did not cease with the Revolution, and, like so many of his fellow creators of the *estampes galantes*, he spent the years of the Terror in producing mediocre work that suited the taste of the revolutionary party. But,

unlike others, his own distinctive talent blossomed again under the First Empire, and "Les Courses du Matin" and "Frascati," dated respectively 1805 and 1807, are interpretations of the new society as intuitive and as sympathetic as his gayer and more delicate pictures of the old régime.

None of the other French colour engravers of the period are on a level with Debucourt and Janinet. Charles-Melchior Descourtis, however, a pupil of Janinet, produced four prints which are among the most famous in the world. "La Rixe" and "Le Tambourin," which fetched £185 at Sotheby's, "Foire de Village" and "Noce de Village" which sold for £290, easily rival Janinet's work. All are after N. A. Taunay. But Descourtis never did anything else as good, although "L'Amant Surpris" and "Les Espiègles," both after F. J. Schall, are very popular and went for £520 the pair at the same sale. A print that must be mentioned is "La Promenade du Jardin du Palais Royal," which used to be attributed to Debucourt, but which is really by Louis Lecoeur, after C. L. Desrais. Other delightful prints are "Les Grâces Parisiennes au Bois de Vincennes," by J. B. Chapuy after Lavreince, "Le Déjeuner Anglais" and "La Leçon interrompue," by G. Vidal, after Lavreince, "Les Chagrins de l'Enfance," by Louis Lecoeur, after Mouchet, and "La Sonnette," by Laurent Guyot, after J. B. Mallet.

The colour prints which illustrate the Revolution have a more purely historical interest. Liberty, Equality and Fraternity, and the high moral tone appropriate to them, seem to have somewhat crushed the sprightly imaginations of the colour engravers. "Le Peuple parcourant les Rues," by Antoine François Sergent-Marceau, from "Tableaux de Revolutions de Paris depuis 1789," is a typical example of the best type of Revolution print. "On doit à la Patrie le sacrifice de ses plus chères affections" and "Il est glorieux de mourir pour la Patrie" are fine prints by Pierre Charles Coqueret. There was an immense demand for portraits of the outstanding personages of the period, and Pierre Michel Alix (1762–1827) was one of the most prolific of the portrait-engravers. Among his early plates is one of Marie-Antoinette, and his prints depict the features of all the notable men of the Revolution, the Directoire, the Consulate, the Empire and the Restoration. One of his best portraits is of Louis XVIII.

The most famous colour-printer of the nineteenth century is undoubtedly George Baxter, for whose work a flourishing cult has sprung up recently. The immense vogue of the Baxter prints is probably a reflection of the present tendency to revert to the Victorian age rather than a reward due to their intrinsic merits, for although sound and competent in craftsmanship they are scarcely inspiring works of art. It is

even in doubt whether Baxter was really the inventor of the process which he patented, for William Savage's book, "Practical Hints on Decorative Printing," published in 1818, contains information about a method of printing chiaroscuros in several colours which is not in essentials very different from Baxter's method. This, however, is not the place to discuss this problem, and the books of Mr. C. T. Courtney Lewis, Baxter's great champion, may be consulted by all whose interest is aroused by the Victorian sentiment of these curious prints.

George Baxter was born at Lewes in 1804, his father being a printer and publisher of repute. He was trained in the engraver's art, and co-operated in the illustration of Horsefield's "History of Lewes," published by his father in 1824 and 1827. For the first volume he executed some lithographs, while the second was illustrated with line engravings from his own designs. He then removed to London, and began experimenting with colour-printing. His first prints appeared in 1834, in Mudie's "Feathered Tribes of the British Isles," and were followed in 1835 by the illustrations to Mudie's "The Heavens," "The Earth," "The Air," and "The Sea." In 1835 Baxter applied for a patent for his process, and the wording of his specification is illuminating: "My Invention consists in colouring impressions of steel and copper plate engravings, and lithographic and zincographic printing, by means of

block printing, in place of colouring such impressions by hand, as heretofore practised. . . . Having thus described the nature of my invention, and the manner of carrying the same into effect, I would remark that I am aware that many years ago some attempts were made to tint copper-plate impressions, called claro obscuro, which consisted in giving additional tints of the same or nearly the same colour. I do not therefore lay any claim to such tinting. But what I claim as my improvement consists in colouring the impressions from steel or copper plates, or from lithographic stones or from zinc, by means of block printing as described." In making this claim Baxter displays a marvellous ignorance of the work of his predecessors in colour-printing, for Jackson and Savage were quite familiar with the process of taking a series of colour impressions from wood-blocks, and Kirkall usually took his first impression from a mezzotint plate before applying colours from wood-blocks, to say nothing of the fact that the German sixteenth-century chiaroscurists often used a metal plate for the first impression. However, although there was perhaps nothing radically new in Baxter's patent, novel features in his method were undoubtedly the enormous number of blocks he used, often twenty to thirty, and his use of oil-colours. The key plate was usually in aquatint, and when the subject required it he employed line engraving or mezzotint with equal readiness. In 1837 he

issued from his premises at Charterhouse Square "The Pictorial Album, or Cabinet of Paintings," with eleven plates which are among his best work and show his sure draughtsmanship, his sense of colour, and his amazing patience in executing the delicate minutiæ of his subjects. In 1849 Baxter obtained an extension of his patent for five years, and at the same time began to issue licences to other printers for the use of his patent. Abraham Le Blond was the most important printer of those who took out a licence, and he produced some very good work, which is not very easily distinguished from that of Baxter himself. In 1860 Baxter retired, disposing of his entire stock of prints and blocks, and living in seclusion at Sydenham, where he died in 1867.

Mr. Courtney Lewis has catalogued three hundred and seventy-six Baxter prints, including those used as book illustrations. All sorts of subjects appear, and only a very cursory survey is possible here. Between 1840 and 1848 Baxter was working for several missionary societies, and the "Departure of the 'Camden'" is his first print issued as a separate plate. Several scenes in the South Seas, India, China, etc., appear among the missionary prints, and are not without a certain interest. During this period he also produced some of his finest prints, such as "The Wreck of the 'Reliance'," "Her Most Gracious Majesty Queen Victoria receiving the Sacrament at her Coronation," "The Arrival of Her Most Gracious

Majesty Queen Victoria at the House of Lords to open the First Parliament of her Reign," and "The Launch of the 'Trafalgar'." Then from 1851 onwards there came a series of "Exhibition" prints, perfect reflections of the Great Exhibition of 1851, the New York Exhibition of 1853, and the Crystal Palace of 1854. There is a large number of portraits, chief among which are of course the several portraits of members of the Royal Family, and the series ranges over soldiers, sailors, statesmen, clergymen and vocalists, an example of the latter class being "Jenny Lind." There are a few religious prints, probably all taken from paintings, though this is seldom acknowledged, a certain number of genre scenes, and a very wide range of landscapes, comprising views in England, Scotland, Wales, Ireland, Italy, Switzerland, France, Holland, Germany, etc.

Whatever may be thought of the artistic worth of Baxter's prints, there is no doubt that his work proved a strong stimulant to the art of colour-printing for the masses. He was the first to point the way to the commercial possibilities of reproducing pictures in large numbers for sale at a small price, and therefore a debt of gratitude is owed to him for the pleasure and profit which thousands of people have derived from the contemplation of coloured reproductions of the works of the great painters.

The further history of colour-printing on Baxter's lines, and the development of the modern

photo-mechanical processes, are outside the scope of the print-collector. There is, however, a very definite revival nowadays of the art of pure colour-printing, and many very beautiful prints have been produced recently which are well worth the attention of the collector. The pioneer was Theodore Roussel, who was born in France in 1847 and came to England about 1874. Until 1888 he had been exclusively a painter, but from that date he executed many charming etchings, in addition to experimenting with the colour-print process. Aquatint is his chosen medium, and his infinite care and patience has found means of producing the most subtle and varied gradations of tone. The effect of his prints is almost entirely decorative, for as a rule the central pictorial composition is set in a most elaborate border, printed in gold among other colours. His most astonishing plate is "L'Agonie des Fleurs," in the printing of which twenty-two impressions were taken from ten engraved plates. William Lee Hankey's later colour aquatints are done in the manner of Roussel, from several plates, though his earlier and less effective work was executed *à la poupée*. He has a broad vigour of handling, which gives a very attractive atmosphere to such a print as "The Fish Market at Étaples." E. L. Laurenson is another aquatinter with a fine sense of colour and design, and "Stopham Bridge," "Chelsea Reach" and "Gorges of the Tarn" might be added with advantage to any

collection. Alfred Hartley's "By the Cornish Sea—Falmouth," Nelson Dawson's "Scotch Herring Boats going to Sea—Scarborough" and Raphael Roussel's "Sun through the Yellow Mist—Chelsea" are all examples of technique which would have been thought impossible by the early nineteenth century workers in aquatint. Frederick Marriott has produced etchings and aquatints of high merit, but his chief claim to note lies in his colour mezzotints. Here he has not followed the old mezzotint engravers, who used colour to add attraction to a worn reproductive plate, but he works direct from Nature and uses the full richness of the burr to hold his colour. Plates such as "Château Gaillard," "A Bruges Gateway," and "A Farm near Falaise," are outstanding examples of his interesting work.

The bulk of modern colour work, however, is done from wood blocks printed in the Japanese manner. This does not differ in essentials from the method adopted by the German engravers of the sixteenth century, of which the most striking example is Altdorfer's "Our Lady of Ratisbon." It is possible that some of the early Italian chiaroscuros found their way to the East, and influenced the development of the art there, but it is impossible to be dogmatic on this point, and the important fact is that in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries the Japanese colour print grew to be a thing of amazing beauty, and that it has had an immense influence upon

modern artists in this medium—and not in this medium alone. The subject of Japanese prints is far too specialised to be embarked on here, and most people know at least the work of Hiroshige and Hokusai, with its Japanese selectiveness of taste, which prefers the single flower to the massed bunch and the solitary wave to the whole sea. The technique is simple, but quite different from that employed in other types of colour work. The design is cut upon the requisite number of blocks, including the key-block which is printed in black or grey, and the colours are applied to each block. Then the damp paper is placed on the first block, and the back of the paper is lightly rubbed to take the impression. The paper is then placed on the second block, and so on until the finished print is achieved.

William Giles, who succeeded Theodore Roussel as president of the Society of Graver Printers in Colour, has devoted a great part of his life to the experimental study of methods of colour-printing. With an intimate knowledge of Japanese methods of wood-block printing, he passed on to wood-block printing from metal plates, and has worked out elaborate methods that have some kinship with Blake's experiments in book illustration, and yet are peculiarly his own. His prints in the Japanese technique are very beautiful, notably "Swan and Cygnets," "September Moon" and "The Passing of the Crescent, Umbria," but the labour caused by the rapid

drying of the water-colour washes on the wood made him turn to the alternative method of relief-printing from zinc plates. The process is really the application of the principles of wood-block printing to metal. The design is transferred to the plates, the part to be left in relief is covered with a protective varnish, and the plate is lightly bitten with acid. As the edges of the part intended for relief begin to stand out, they are protected by resin, and the bitings are repeated until the design stands out clearly enough for printing. The colours are mixed with volatile oil instead of water, and since the oil evaporates slowly the printing is greatly facilitated. A full series of technical examples illustrating the different stages of the method, with Mr. Giles's own descriptive notes, is in the Victoria and Albert Museum. His work always combines knowledge with distinction, and from his profound study of bird and plant life he has produced many plates such as "When Winter Wanes" and his recent "Scarlet Runners," marked by sensitive colour and grace of design, as well as many charming landscapes, among them "Midsummer Night," "Sand Dunes, Denmark," "The Sacred Pastures of Clitunno," and "The Break in the Storm—Isle of Jura."

Sydney Lee is one of the adherents of the pure Japanese method, and his very attractive prints are built up in flat tones. "The Sloop Inn," and "Boat Building" are among his best

prints. The late Charles Mackie employed oil colours and dispensed with the key-block, and "The Return of the Flock" and "The Ducal Palace, Venice" are rich in tone and subtle in atmosphere. Miss Mabel Royds specialises in Indian prints, and "Sword Grinders" and "The Prickly Pear" are good examples of her distinguished art. Miss Elyse Lord confines herself to Chinese subjects. Her technique differs from the usual in that the key plate is generally a drypoint, and these delicate prints, with their subtle harmonies of colour, have attained a great popularity. Among the best are "Before the Dance," "The Dance," and "The End of the Dance," "Concert," "On the Terrace" and "In the Palace of Pong-laii." Allan W. Seaby has produced some charming prints of birds, such as "Swans," "Kingfishers," and "Peewits." J. E. Platt is one of the finest artists of the colour print, and "The Giants Stride," and "The Harbour, St. Tropez," show his originality of design and his subtle feeling for colour. Claude Flight has used linoleum cuts for striking and original colour-prints. Based on rhythmic curves and geometric formulas, his work is essentially intellectual, but is marked always by fine qualities of design and emotional colour. Such prints as "Speed," "The Paris Omnibus" and the set of the "Seasons" strike a very personal note and convey dynamic movement in pleasant colour schemes.

Lucien Pissarro and Émile Verpilleux are two distinguished engravers who do not use the Japanese method, but employ the printing press and coloured printing inks. Pissarro's work is mainly for book illustration, and Verpilleux has a subtle sense of colour allied to a power of massive design which results in such striking prints as "The British Museum" and "Edinburgh Castle." Colour printers in France whose work should be noted are Henri Rivière, for "Le Bois du Béret" and "Baie de la Fresnaye"; P. A. Isaac for "Les Capucines" and "Scheveningen"; A. Jacquin, for "L'Ex-voto" and Camille Beltrand, for his delicately serene prints such as "Paysage au Pommier" and "Ruelle des Gobelins."

CHAPTER IX

LITHOGRAPHY

THE origins of engraving, etching, mezzotint, and aquatint are all surrounded by a certain amount of mystery, both in the matter of dates and of their inventors. In the case of lithography it is all plain sailing, for there is no doubt that the entire credit of the discovery and development of this art belongs to Alois Senefelder, born at Prague, and later a resident in Munich, where his father was an actor in the Royal Theatre. In his youth, Senefelder had ambitions as a musical composer, and need of economy in the effort to find publication for his compositions led him to essay the triple rôle of composer, printer and publisher as well. With all this in mind, he was making attempts to etch his musical scores in relief on copper at about the same time when Blake in England was making similar experiments in the reproduction of the combined text and illustrations of his books. It was while working on these lines that, almost by accident, Senefelder discovered the process of lithography, and arrived at those developments

of technique by which the lithograph of to-day, whether the refined work of Ethel Gabain or the most flaunting of cinema posters, is to all intents and purposes still produced.

Lithography, unlike all the other methods with which we are dealing, is not really a process of engraving, but a means of producing an autographic facsimile of the artist's drawing. It is based on the elementary fact that grease and water will not combine. The story, in all probability a perfectly true one, is that Senefelder was using a polished slab of the local Solenhofen stone for grinding the printing-ink for his etching, and while he was at work his mother asked him to jot down the items of a laundry bill. This he did with a lump of dried ink, mixed of course with printing oil, on the surface of his polished stone. The stone absorbed the grease, and when it was washed over with water it was apparent at once that the water ran off the greasy pattern of the writing as from a duck's back, and was absorbed by the stone elsewhere. This gave Senefelder the idea that he might subject his stone to the action of a weak acid, leaving his writing or drawing in relief as a printing surface. He soon realised that relief was not actually necessary, and that the almost equal absorptive qualities of Kelheim or Solenhofen stone for grease and water afforded a planographic method of printing, based on the fact that grease and water are mutually antipathetic. He discovered that when

he damped his stone and passed over it a printing roller charged with greasy ink, the ink only adhered to parts of the stone that were covered by his original writing or drawing, and that the ink was repelled by all the remaining wet parts of the stone. A piece of damped paper could then be laid upon the stone, and a proof taken in the printing-press. Senefelder also found that he could draw with greasy ink on a "transfer paper," coated with gum or starch to prevent the ink being absorbed by the paper, and that the drawing so made could be transferred under heavy pressure to a polished stone. There is still controversy as to whether the drawing made on transfer paper is quite so original, or can give quite such volume and quality of tone, as the drawing made directly on the stone. The great exponent of the "auto-lithograph," the drawing made direct, was Joseph Pennell, whose "Lithography and Lithographers" is a book that should be consulted by everyone interested in the history and development of lithographic art. Many modern artists, like Mr. Charles Shannon, believe firmly that a better result is obtained from direct work on the stone, and Mr. Spencer Pryse did some of his War pictures on stones that were carried, along with official despatches, on the Belgian front in 1915. The modern artist, however, knows little about the method that Senefelder did not discover in 1798. He produced then a method which enabled an artist to work as freely and rapidly as with pencil

on paper, and which allowed for reproduction while still preserving the autographic spontaneity of the artist's personal expression.

Senefelder had gone to England in 1800 for the purpose of taking out patents in his new discovery, and the earliest lithographs were published in England. They are, of course, very experimental, and the art did not take firm root in England until the lead had been given by the magnificent achievements of the great lithographers of France. In 1803 the first book of lithographs appeared: "Specimens of Polyautography, consisting of Impressions taken from Original Drawings made purposely for this Work." The artists included Stothard, Fuseli, Benjamin West and Hearne. A later portfolio, published about 1816, contained three lithographs of boats by Cornelius Varley, and among others who tried their hands on the stone at this time were Bewick and William Blake, who had probably come into contact with Senefelder during the latter's visit to London. The possibilities of lithography for book-illustration were appreciated very rapidly, and the first illustration in this medium appeared in "Antiquities of Westminster" by J. T. Smith, published in 1807, although the first book that was planned to be illustrated throughout with lithographs was "Britannia Delineata," begun in 1822, and containing work by Prout and Harding. Later in the century, lithography, and particularly colour-lithography, had an enormous

Eugène Isabey

Marée Basse

Lithograph

vogue as book-illustration. Artists who gave much time and attention to lithography were the water-colour painters, J. D. Harding and George Cattermole, and the perfection of colour work in this manner will be found in the "Views of London" and "Views of Paris," by Thomas Shotter Boys. Boys's fine draughtsmanship and command of his medium make each of the illustrations worthy of consideration as a print for the collector.

France, however, was the country where the possibilities of lithography as an artistic medium were first appreciated. The new art arrived in Paris about 1800, and by 1811 it had become the fashionable rage. Fostered at first in drawing-rooms, it was rapidly taken up by the artists, and from 1820 to 1840 hundreds of lithographs were produced, including very many of the great masterpieces. This rapid popularity was due largely to the enterprising printing firm of Engelmann, who played in early lithography a part similar to that of Ackermann in aquatint.

One of the most interesting developments was the propagation of the "Napoleonic Legend," which resulted in large numbers of prints dealing with Napoleon's wars. Probably the first Napoleon print was that drawn in 1817 by Horace Vernet, but dozens of others soon followed in his footsteps. Charlet and Raffet were the two outstanding lithographers of military scenes, and it has been well said of them that "Napoleon I

owed to them his legend, and Napoleon III his throne." Charlet was pre-eminently the soldier's artist, simple and sincere in sentiment, exalting devotion to the Emperor and France above every other virtue, and restraining his humour to the good-natured jests of the camp. His technique was superb, and the rush and movement of his best prints could not be surpassed. Raffet, with an equally fine technique, was more sophisticated and therefore more theatrical, but in his best moments he plumbed a depth where Charlet could not go. He saw the horror of war more than its glory, and sympathised with the miseries of the troops more than with the splendour of their cause. His three finest prints are "Ils grognaient mais ils les suivaient toujours," "Le Réveil," and "La Revue Nocturne."

Landscape lithography made a triumphant début with Baron Taylor's vast publication "Voyages Pittoresques et Romantiques dans l'Ancienne France." It dealt with France by provinces, and eventually comprised about twenty-four folio volumes, with about 2,700 plates. Publication was made possible by a grant from the State, and the first volume appeared in 1820, the last in 1863. The spirit of the illustrations reflects the romantic movement, and presents a unique history of the development of lithography during almost fifty years. Many of the plates were done by almost unknown men, but Eugène Isabey, Bonington, Géricault, Prout, and Harding combined to make

the earlier volumes memorable. Bonington and Isabey dispute the honours of the finest achievement; Bonington's "Rue du Gros-Horloge à Rouen" is deservedly famous, but Isabey's "Église St. Jean à Thiers" is at least equal to it. Prout and Harding both appear at their very best; the former in "Ruines de l'Abbaye de Beaune" and the latter in "Château de Foix" and "Bords du Rhône." The later volumes are not so interesting, but Eugène Cicéri, the nephew of Isabey, did some extremely good work.

Eugène Isabey's lithographs, which almost all deal with the sea, are among the finest known. His best work is in "Souvenirs d'Eugène Isabey," published in 1832, and "Six Marines," 1833. Among these plates are "Brick Echoué," a dramatic picture of desolation, "Environs de Dieppe" and "Radoub d'une Barque à Marée Basse." Isabey stands out in these prints immeasurably above his contemporaries in lithography, although much good work was being done by such men as Géricault, Achille Devéria in his portraits, Celestin Nanteuil and Paul Huet. Eugène Delacroix experimented with lithography, but the majority of his prints, numbering about a hundred, are not exciting, with the exception of two masterpieces, "Lion de l'Atlas" and "Tigre Royal."

The journalist Philipon was the first to realise the aptitude of the lithograph for newspaper illustration, and in 1832 he started "La Caricature," which contained each week two political

caricatures in lithography. Constant conflict with the police, however, damped its success, and in 1832 Philipon founded "Le Charivari," which is still alive. Among the lithographs published daily by this paper there appeared the finest work of two of the greatest lithographers and greatest caricaturists in the world, Honoré Daumier and "Gavarni." Gavarni, whose real name was Guillaume Sulpice Chevalier, was born in 1804, and in 1830 he was on the staff of "La Mode," and making a reputation as a dress designer. His contributions to "Charivari" began in 1833, and until his death in 1866 he produced an amazing number of lithographs, all showing a vivid imagination, a vigorous and certain technique and a lively sense of humour. Strictly speaking, he was not a caricaturist, for he did not emphasise unduly human follies and frailties, but found in them delightfully humorous subjects for his pencil. All the life of Paris in its many circles is mirrored in his prints, and though he grew more satirical as he grew older he never became bitter. In 1847 he went to London, and contributed to the London papers, but in 1851 he returned to Paris. "Œuvres Nouvelles," published just before he went to England, contained the famous "Chemin de Toulon," depicting the career of a criminal, and "Masques et Visages," which appeared shortly after his return to Paris, is his finest achievement. One of the series was called "Propos de Thomas Vireloque," and includes what is possibly his finest

Honoré Daumier
Moeurs Conjugales
Lithograph

lithograph, "Thomas Vireloque." His print of "Edmond et Jules de Goncourt," a serious and very penetrating study, shows his ability in portraiture.

Daumier, who was born in 1808, and joined the band of artists who contributed to "Charivari," was perhaps an even finer lithographer than Gavarni. With his enormous output of over four thousand prints, he often fell below the level of his best work, but the vast majority of his prints are little short of amazing in their ruthless penetration of character and the swiftness and certainty of the draughtsmanship. Daumier's real métier was that of a political caricaturist, but after six months in the prison of Sainte-Pélagie he confined himself to the safer realms of social satire. His subjects are much the same as those of Gavarni, but they are bitter and profound caricatures. One of his most immortal creations is "Robert Macaire," a character who personified in various rôles all the cant and humbug that Daumier noted in the life around him. His prints scarcely make an æsthetic appeal, but no one can deny their force, and series such as "Gens de Justice," "Bas Bleus" and "Mœurs Conjugales" are classics of satire. Curiously enough, the lithograph which is unanimously hailed as his masterpiece is not a caricature—the terrible "Rue Transnonain."

But after this triumphant outburst lithography in France faded away. The cheapness of the process was fatal, and floods of indifferent lithographs

were poured out all over the country, so that artists gave it up in disgust. Except for a few sporadic efforts, such as the rare lithographs of Corot, Millet and Courbet, the art drifted into an oblivion from which it was only raised towards the close of the nineteenth century.

The first signs of the revival appeared in France with the work of Fantin-Latour, whose earliest attempts at lithography had been made in the 'sixties under the persuasion of the publisher Cadart, but who did not take it up in earnest until 1873, when he published "À la mémoire de Robert Schumann." He produced a very large number of lithographs, the majority of which dealt with his favourite subject of music. The theme lent itself to artificiality and false sentiment, and also to a pronounced monotony of treatment. Without the titles it would be impossible to distinguish from one another all these prints of misty maidens swirling about in vague scenes from the operas, such as "Scène première du Rheingold," "Siegfried et les Filles du Rhin," "Parsifal et les Filles-Fleurs" and "Prélude de Lohengrin." But they have grace and delicacy, and occasionally the design is really good. He is much more satisfactory, however, when not interpreting music, and lithographs such as "Baigneuses" and "Sara la Baigneuse" show exquisite modelling of the nude and very attractive effects of clear light and shade. His studies of flowers contain some of his best work.

Forain's lithographs deal with the same type of subject as his etchings, and his style, too, is similar. Some of his prints of scenes in the Paris law courts, such as "Conseil juridique" and "L'Avocat Invectivé" are masterpieces, and he is equally skilful in dealing with the daily matters of Parisian life.

Alexandre Lunois did a great many lithographs, and "Hollandaise de Volendam" is deservedly popular. Félicien Rops, among a great deal of work unfit for publication, produced some splendid prints. Manet's few lithographs are like his etchings, uncertain in technique but redeemed by the originality and vigour of the design and drawing. Steinlen's work is more important, and places him among the masters of the process. Like his contemporaries in France, he is essentially a draughtsman, not worrying about technical finish but putting down with swift strokes the vivid impressions of his imagination. He makes us realise not so much visual facts as the idea and the emotion that underlie them. That is why his cats are not mere animals but the embodiment of all that is feline. Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec is another of the great lithographers, and is of particular interest for the influence he had on the new art of the poster. The cover of "L'Estampe Originale," which was also used as a poster, is an excellent example of his trenchant draughtsmanship and his method of applying the colour in flat tones. He drew his subjects from all

classes of Parisian society, and is an unrivalled interpreter of the flaunting and weary women of the café and the music-hall. Pierre Bonnard is a lithographer of great talent, especially in the suggestion of atmosphere. His "Quelques aspects de la vie de Paris" stands beside Lautrec's "Elles" as a very remarkable achievement in colour lithography. Maurice Denis, who later devoted himself to wood-engraving, did some attractive early lithographs. "La Lecture sous la Treille" is full of quiet charm. Forain's lithographs are few in number, but "L'Hotel Meublé" and "Femmes à leur Toilette" are masterpieces. Other modern Frenchmen whose work should be searched for are Anquetin, Valloton, Odilon-Redon, Dillon and Lepère.

In England the revival came later than in France. Whistler and Fantin-Latour had been fellow-students, and this may have influenced Whistler to yield to the persuasion of Thomas Way, the printer, and to make his first experiments in lithography in 1878. He did in all about one hundred and sixty lithographs, some of which are very slight, but "Nocturne," "The Thames from the Savoy" and "Limehouse" show how perfectly adapted the process was for expressing his delicate art. Many of his lithographs are portraits, such as "The Winged Hat" and "Gants de Suède," and there are some charming studies of the nude, of which "The Little Nude Model Reading" is a good example. Buildings

attracted him, too, and quiet corners of little old provincial towns in France, and prints such as "Rue Fürstenberg" and "St. Giles-in-the-Fields" are full of atmosphere and grace. He attempted colour lithography also, but did not go on with it, and "The Red House, Paimpol," and "The Yellow House, Lannion" are almost the only examples. But Whistler worked at lithography under immense difficulties, at first carting his stones about London in barges and barrows, and later with unsatisfactory transfer paper, and always in despair at the lack of skill of the printers. He himself was never satisfied with his work, but although at the time his fellow artists and the public received it with complete indifference, he did accomplish for lithography in England what Fantin-Latour did for it in France.

There was no immediate response to the lead given by Whistler in spite of the efforts of Thomas Way to create an interest in lithography among some of the artists of the day. An important factor in the renewal of interest was the Centenary Exhibition of Lithography held in Paris in 1895, to which English artists were asked to contribute, and an exhibition of Whistler's lithographs in 1895 led Joseph Pennell to make his first attempts on the stone. Charles Shannon was one of the first to turn seriously to lithography, and some of his best prints appeared in "The Dial," "The Savoy" and "The Pageant." He is extraordinarily

skilful in handling delicate gradations of silver and pearl tones, and many of his prints are rather akin to those of Fantin-Latour in their atmosphere of unreality. The "Romantic Landscape" is of this type, but Shannon could also command a more robust manner even in subjects of fantasy, as in the delightful "Infancy of Bacchus." His studies of the nude show beautiful modelling and most graceful poses, and the "Stone Bath" series contains some of his most attractive work, "The Pursuit," with the surging bodies of the swimmers, gives a wonderful effect of deep clear water, and "Mother and Child," "Caresses" and "A Little Apple" are charming prints of a type that so often is merely sentimental.

The foundation of "The Neolith" in 1907 showed that lithography had at last won its battle. The magazine, in which both text and illustrations were in lithography, ran only for a year, but among its contributors were Brangwyn, Spencer Pryse, F. Ernest Jackson, Joseph Pennell and Shannon. In 1909 the victory was established by the foundation of the Senefelder Club, which included among its original members the majority of those who have since made themselves a name in lithography. The day had passed when lithography was despised as a purely commercial art, and its life is now as vigorous, if not as prolific, as that of etching.

Outstanding among the modern workers in lithography is John Copley, whose prints have a

JOHN COPLEY

Jesus and a Woman of the City

Lithograph

monumental quality for which lithography is the medium *par excellence*. Landscape does not appeal to him in any of its forms, and many of his figure studies are nudes, or lightly clad in revealing drapery. He has done a charming series of prints of nude women and children, similar in conception to Shannon's "Stone Bath" series, but full of strength and profundity in place of the superficiality and gracefulness of Shannon's work. "Madonna baciante," "Madonna seduta" and "Madonna genitrice" are among the most remarkable of this series. He has produced many prints dealing with the theatre, of which "Foot-lights" is a typical example, and many admirable designs of men engaged in heavy toil, so that their limbs are stiffened into poses of sculptural massiveness. In 1923 he began the series of New Testament prints, which contains some of his finest work, and the simple compositions, dramatic and restrained, have a spiritual significance which is also attained only by Forain among the moderns. The work of Miss Ethel Gabain (Mrs. John Copley) is as thoroughly feminine as Mr. Copley's is thoroughly masculine. Miss Gabain has a fine sense of decorative value, and a lightness of touch that is French in inspiration. Her delicate talent is especially suited to the picturing of women, particularly eighteenth-century women, and "La Vénitienne," "Madame de Coulanges mourning the death of Madame de Sévigné" and "Madame Figaro" are beautiful examples of her art. But

delicacy and gracefulness are not the only characteristics of Miss Gabain's work; she has also an unerring sense of design, as shown in "Summer Night," "Choix de Bottes" and "Three Ships." It is interesting to note that both these artists are ardent supporters of the lithograph drawn directly on the stone, and not on transfer paper. Opinions are divided as to the merits of the two processes, but one fact is certain: whatever the method he may adopt, the lithographer should always do his own printing, for no other type of print can be so made or marred in the press.

F. Ernest Jackson, who was one of the founders of the Senefelder Club, is one of the champions of the colour lithograph. "The Release" and "Sweet William," show the beautiful results that can be obtained by careful work in this manner. Many of his pupils at the Central School of Arts and Crafts and the Chelsea Polytechnic have been inspired by his example to attempt the same medium, and colour lithography is now rapidly overhauling the popularity of the wood-block colour-print. Spencer Pryse, whose vigorous posters are well-known, is one of the most distinguished workers in lithography on the large scale. His drawings of crowds, as in "The Coursing Match," are vivid with life and character, and his war lithographs, made on the Western Front, are notable among the artistic records of the war. Frank Bran-

gwyn's lithographs show that this medium is far more suited to his virile genius than the careful technique of etching. His subjects are those of his etchings and paintings—workers in the factory and at the docks taking the largest place. "The Great Furnace" and "Unloading Oranges at London Bridge" are splendid examples of his powerful draughtsmanship and sense of massive design. An artist to whom sufficient credit has never been given is Harry Becker, who is at his best in his lithographs, though they are perhaps too summary for popular favour. His subjects dealing with pasture and byre and the work of the fields are inspired with knowledge of the countryside and with real power of vigorous drawing. Other lithographers whose work should be added to any representative collection are A. S. Hartrick, E. J. Sullivan, J. Kerr Lawson, J. S. Sargent, Augustus John and William Rothenstein.

In America lithography has not as yet taken a very firm root, although the foundations have been laid for future achievement. Joseph Pennell did much work of high technical excellence, and his drawings of the skyscrapers of New York are full of interest. George Bellows's lithographs of boxers show his preoccupation with chiaroscuro and the fine effect that can result from skilful handling of the deep black given by the stone. Albert Sterner concentrated mainly on portraiture, and "Head of a Sculptor" shows his appreciation of the quality of the medium and the reserved

strength of his drawing. "The Stranger" is a powerful study of deep shadows.

In Germany, the country of its origin, lithography was confined from the very beginning almost entirely to the reproduction of pictures for purely commercial purposes. Some of this work was technically of a very high standard, but there seemed to be no attempt to produce original work, in spite of the example of journals such as the "Düsseldorfer Monatshefte," which was modelled on "Le Charivari." Only one artist emerges from the ruck of commercial work in Germany in the nineteenth century—the great Adolf von Menzel. He was born in 1815, and by 1833 he was working at commercial lithography, so that he had a good training in technique before embarking on his original prints. In 1834 appeared his "Denkwürdigkeiten aus der Brandenburgisch-Preussischen Geschichte," a series of events in Prussian history, and in 1851–7 was published "Die Armée Friedrichs des Grossen in ihrer Uniformierung," an astonishing set of prints showing a vast knowledge of costume and power of rapidly seizing a character. In addition he produced a great number of separate prints, dealing with all kinds of subjects, of which "The Garden" and "Christ in the Temple" are typical examples, showing, in their very different subjects, Menzel's ability in controlling gradations of tone, his grasp of essential character and his power of composition. Within recent years artists

in Germany have at last realised the potentialities of lithography, and now a good deal of work is being done, especially in colour-lithography.

Lithography being a process that can be adapted for quick reproduction on a large scale, it was soon employed as the main method for posters, and in a chapter on Lithography posters must have their place. One of the earliest appearances of the word "poster" is in "Nicholas Nickleby" (1838-9), where Mr. Vincent Crummles wants Nicholas to make a poster showing the whole depth of the stage with the real pump and tubs in the middle. Then, nearly sixty years ago, came Fred Walker's poster advertising the stage production of "The Woman in White." The poster, though commercial, ceased to be crude, and artists of the highest distinction devoted to it some of their finest work. The great period of the poster began in the 'eighties and 'nineties of last century, and the cult of the Japanese print helped in the development of simple and flat colour schemes. The direct and daring posters of Toulouse-Lautrec flashed like new stars on the hoardings of Paris, and led to the development of a brilliant school of poster-designers, among them Chéret, Bonnard, Willette, Steinlen and Forain. In England there was the superb work of the Beggarstaff Brothers (William Nicholson and James Pryde), followed by Aubrey Beardsley, and in later days by Brangwyn, Lovat Fraser, Spencer Pryse, McKnight Kauffer, Herrick, Horace Taylor—to mention only a few

who have added real works of art to "the poor man's picture gallery." In Germany there is Hohlwein; in France Dransy and Jean d'Ylen. All of these artists, and many others, have produced lithographic posters which are of permanent value in the history of Art, and the student will find a very large collection of such work in the Victoria and Albert Museum. The collector has an enormous field in the work of the last fifty years, and in the vast quantities of superb posters which are being issued to-day, notably by our Railway Companies; the Underground Railways, under Mr. Frank Pick, being among the first to recognise the value of the fine poster for advertising, both direct and indirect. The main trouble for the collector lies, of course, in the somewhat large size of many posters and the difficulty of preserving them, but they can be laid down on linen and easily kept in a large press. The collection of War Posters alone, with the comprehensive book by Mr. Martin Hardie and Mr. A. K. Sabin (1920) as a guide, is a subject offering interesting opportunities.

CHAPTER X

MODERN ETCHING

IT has been shown how the art of original etching almost completely disappeared for the century and a half covering the final years of the seventeenth century, the eighteenth and the first quarter of the nineteenth century. In Italy, indeed, the eighteenth century saw etching in its most brilliant flowering in that country, but elsewhere the period is marked only by the isolated figures of Crome and Cotman, Wilkie and Geddes, Girtin and Turner. The amazing revival of etching, which makes it nowadays the most popular by far of all the graphic arts, dates only from about the middle of last century, and, though England is now universally accorded the premier place in etching, the renaissance began in France, and was well established there before England produced her first great etcher.

Etching in France between 1830 and 1850 is chiefly landscape etching from the hands of the painters of the Barbizon School. Eugène Delacroix and Alexandre Decamps had both produced

a few plates etched in vigorous technique, but they both gave to lithography most of the interest that could be spared from painting. Rousseau, Jacque, Daubigny, Millet and Corot are the first names in modern etching, and they are all primarily painters. The analogy between Rousseau and John Crome has often been pointed out, each marking a return to the inspiration of the old Dutch etchers and each to some extent deriving from Ruysdael. Charles Jacque's first plates appeared about 1841, and in the course of a long life he produced more than five hundred etchings, mostly genre studies in the Dutch manner, which at their best reveal a power of concise draughtmanship and a sympathetic interpretation of peasant life which puts them on a level with their Dutch models. Many of his plates are studies of animals, and pigs appear to have possessed an unfailing charm. Like Theocritus, he was a "singer of the field and fold," and unwearied in the picturing of the nature that he loved. The "Intérieur de Bergerie" is the work of one who felt an instinctive kindship with every animal on earth, and such a plate as "Le Moulin," derived from Rembrandt's dark manner, shows that he had also an imaginative apprehension of the mysteries of dawn and dusk, wind and rain and sun, which form a background to the little life of field and byre. J. F. Millet did about twenty plates, some of them scarcely more than sketches, and showed in them the same powers which have placed him among the great painters.

His handling of chiaroscuro, in such a plate as "Two Women Sewing by candlelight," is particularly powerful, though one of his last plates, "Peasants going to work," shows how much he could do with pure line and how little he needed to rely on tone effects. Camille Corot's few etchings have all the quality of misty light which charms the eye in his paintings, but his importance in the history of etching is small. Daubigny etched a good deal, but his work is not very interesting, although "L'Arbre aux Corbeaux" and "Clair de Lune à Valmondois" have a certain charm.

Charles Meryon (1821-1868) is one of the supreme masters of etching, and his marvellous views of Paris have been a source of inspiration to all the modern architectural etchers. He was the first to realise that buildings of brick and stone do in some manner themselves become possessed of sentient being, so that a happy house and a tragic one bear their characters upon their faces, and the streets where horrors have been done cry it aloud for ever from the stones. No one has ever expressed this quite so poignantly as Meryon, and that may be because he himself stood so near the borderline between the seen and the unseen. The illegitimate son of an English doctor and a French dancing girl, his whole life was shadowed by the circumstances of his birth and he finally met his mother's end in the asylum at Charenton. He started life in the French navy, but abandoned it

to study art, and finding that he was colour-blind he devoted himself to etching under the guidance of Eugène Bléry. His first attempts, mainly of ships and seascapes, are in no way remarkable, but in 1850 he produced "Le Petit Pont," the first of the famous "Études sur Paris." It is already a finished masterpiece, although he surpassed it later. In 1852 came "La Tour de l'Horloge," "Saint Étienne du Mont" and "La Pompe Notre Dame," the first of the etchings of scaffolding which have since become so frequent and derive more from Meryon's smaller and closer studies than from the vaster and more imaginative outlook of Piranesi. In the following year appeared the most famous plate, "Le Stryge," one of the Gothic monsters which adorn the towers of Notre Dame, gazing with unfathomable eyes over the city spread out below. On one state of this plate Meryon etched the lines:

"Insatiable Vampire, l'éternelle luxure
Sur la grande cité convoite sa pâture."

Many succeeding etchers have attempted the same theme, but no one has represented more than merely a piece of grotesque sculpture, except perhaps Cameron in the "Chimera of Amiens." Then appeared in rapid succession "Le Pont Neuf," "L'Arche du Pont Notre Dame," "La Galerie Notre Dame," one of the most purely

Charles Meryon

La Galerie, Notre Dame

Etching

beautiful plates, "La Rue des Mauvais Garçons," plagiarised almost as much as "Le Stryge," and "L'Abside de Notre Dame," which is perhaps the most pictorially complete. The high water mark is "La Morgue," a marvel of macabre insight. Meryon never again rose to such heights as in this first Paris set, but spent most of the remaining part of his short life in purely hack work for the Paris publishers. "La Rue des Chantres" of 1862, however, is very beautiful in the early state, and indeed all Meryon's etchings must be judged by the early impressions. Modern etchers, including the great Whistler, owe a further debt to Meryon for the improvements he introduced in printing. Delâtre printed his plates, under constant supervision from the artist, and immediately raised the standard of printing to the heights of excellence where it is to-day. The fact must never be overlooked that printing can make or mar an etching. Moreover, Meryon was the first to use old tinted papers, chosen to suit the subject of the print, and in this, too, he gave a lead to many of the moderns.

Technical excellence could go no further than in the work of Jules Jacquemart and Félix Bracquemond. Both dealt mainly with still life subjects, and both aimed at representing as closely as possible the surface texture of the objects they drew. Rembrandt's "Shell" and some of Hollar's plates are the only things comparable that had been done before. Jacquemart

possessed an amazing skill in reproducing the delicate surfaces of porcelain, gems, crystal, armour and bibelots of all descriptions. Bracquemond (1833–1914) was almost equally skilful and more original. His finest work is in his etchings of animals, though he also did a good many landscapes and a great amount of reproductive etchings. An unexpected accomplishment is his skill in portraiture, the well-known portrait of Meryon being the best example. But his reputation rests on his plates of birds, and "Le haut d'un battant de porte" and "Le Vieux Coq" are quite perfect of their kind.

At the same period there were in Paris numbers of competent etchers engaged mainly in reproductive work for book-illustration, and also very many artists of considerable but not outstanding merit who etched pleasant landscapes or followed Meryon in producing views of Paris and provincial cities. Maxime Lalanne is perhaps the only one who deserves mention, if only because he produced a really practical book on etching; but though his etched work is sometimes charming and always technically sound it seems on the whole rather dry and dull. Jan Barthold Jongkind, a Dutchman who worked in Paris, differs from the others in combining a far less complete mastery of technique with a far greater individuality of outlook. The spirit of "Six's Bridge" underlies many of his seascapes.

Alphonse Legros holds an intermediate position between French and English etching as a Frenchman who became naturalised and spent a large part of his life as Slade Professor in University College, London. He is, however, purely French in inspiration and technique, and has little real affinity with the English School, upon which, through his many pupils, he exercised a far-reaching influence. He is closely akin to Millet, but there is nothing imitative in his vigorous technique and in his profound insight into the tragedy of human life. Such plates as "La Mort du Vagabond" and "La Mort et le Bûcheron" sum up all the dumb suffering of the most inarticulate portion of the human race. In his early years Legros was much under the influence of Spanish art and of Goya in particular, and it is to this source that he owed the inspiration for his weird illustrations to Edgar Allen Poe. But he could also express all the peace and charm of the most tranquil landscape, and "La Village Abandonnée," "Le Long de la Rive," "Le Mur du Presbytère," "Les Tourbières près d'Amiens" and "Le Pré ensoleillé" are beautiful and expressive pictures. In his portraits he reverted to the simple manner of Van Dyck, and his reputation largely rests on such plates as "Cardinal Manning," "Auguste Rodin" and "Portrait of Dalou." It was inevitable that, with his immense output, many of Legros's plates should be comparatively mediocre, and discrimination must be exercised

in making a choice. At his best Legros is one of the great French masters.

Edouard Manet was influenced even more deeply than Legros by Spain. Velasquez and Goya charmed him almost equally, and some of his etchings, all in a technique derived from Goya, are after pictures by Velasquez. As a rule he etched from his own pictures, and from his handling of the same subject in the different medium it becomes clear that etching was not really congenial to him, despite the originality of his conceptions and the vigour of his technique.

The Impressionist painters made some attempts on the copper, but never seem to be quite at home with it. The difficulties of obtaining the atmospheric effects of the reflected lights they were so fond of painting discouraged most of them after a few none too successful efforts. Camille Pissarro, however, very often succeeded in producing really spirited plates of figure and landscape.

It has been thought best to treat the French revival as a whole, before shifting the interest to the other side of the Channel. But it must be borne in mind that England was not far behind France in point of time, and that the two countries mutually influenced each other to a very large extent. The dates of some of the artists will make this clear. Jacque was born in 1813 and died in 1894. Meryon, 1821–1868,

Samuel Palmer

The Early Ploughman

Etching

Bracquemond, 1833–1919, Legros, 1830–1911, while Seymour Haden lived from 1818 to 1910, and Whistler from 1834 to 1903. Before dealing with Whistler and Haden, however, we must turn to a much neglected etcher who stands altogether outside the stream of the renaissance.

Samuel Palmer, whose work is only now beginning to gain the recognition it deserves, was a disciple of the tradition of Blake and Calvert, and more closely akin to Calvert than to Blake. He has Calvert's sense of the spiritual unity of all living things and of the divine revelation which, to the seeing eye, appears in dawn and sunset and dusk, in every leaf and every blade of grass. His technique, too, is somewhat similar, with its careful and patient elaboration. But it was from Blake that he received the fundamental inspiration which came to a similar fruition in him and in Calvert because they were both mystics of a lesser mould than Blake. In 1825 he writes in his sketch book of Blake's woodcuts to Virgil: "There is in all such a mystic and dreamy glimmer as penetrates and kindles the inmost soul." Palmer was born in 1805, and at first devoted himself to painting in oils and water-colours. He was forty-five when he produced his first etching, "The Willow," and he had already got away from the direct influence of Blake, which in none of his etchings is so apparent as it is in his drawings. He produced

only thirteen plates, all of which should be ardently searched for, and his highest achievement is in "The Rising Moon," "The Bellman," "The Early Ploughman," "The Herdsman" and "The Lonely Tower."

The starting point of modern etching in England was Whistler's exhibition at the Royal Academy, in 1859, of the first prints of the "Thames Set." The cosmopolitan character of modern art is well exemplified by the American introducing to England the new principles of French art. James Abbott McNeill Whistler was born in the United States in 1834, the son of a major in the American army, and was educated at the West Point Military Academy. For some time he worked in the Coast Survey Department, but in 1855 a conflict with the authorities led to his resignation, and he departed to Paris to study art. His first set of etchings, comprising thirteen plates, was published in 1858, the printer being Delâtre, who printed for Meryon. The "French Set," as it is generally known, at once placed the young artist in the ranks of the great etchers of the world. In these early plates there is nothing of what has often been called his "inhumanity," nothing of the tendency to regard the decorative pattern as of greater importance than the spiritual content, and the human figure as merely a factor in the design. The designs are magnificent, the handling of light and shade superb, but at the same time the old women in "La Mère Gérard"

J. McN. Whistler
Balcony—Amsterdam
Etching

and "La Vieille aux Loques" are drawn with the deepest sympathy and insight. The architectural plates of the series, such as "Street at Saverne" and "Liverdun," are masterly studies in the tradition of Meryon, by whom Whistler was influenced more than he cared to admit. He must also have studied very closely the work of Jacque, and the resemblance between Jacque's "Ma Petite Fille" and Whistler's "Annie Seated," between Jacque's "Récureuse" and Whistler's "La Marchande de Moutarde," has been pointed out.

In 1859 Whistler settled in Chelsea, and the sixteen plates of the "Thames Set" were produced between 1859 and 1871. The novelty of choosing subjects in such places as Wapping and Limehouse raised at the time a storm of criticism, but these plates have had perhaps a wider influence than any others of Whistler's. One of the earliest was the famous "Black Lion Wharf, Wapping," and it remains the most popular, but each plate is a masterpiece. "Limehouse," "Old Westminster Bridge" and "The Lime Burner" are typical examples of Whistler's command at this period of broad and rhythmical design combined with the most searching and delicate detail. The complete set was issued in 1871, and the next series published was the "Venice Set" of 1880. In the interval he had been experimenting with dry-point, and in this medium produced some wonderful portraits. The influence of Meryon

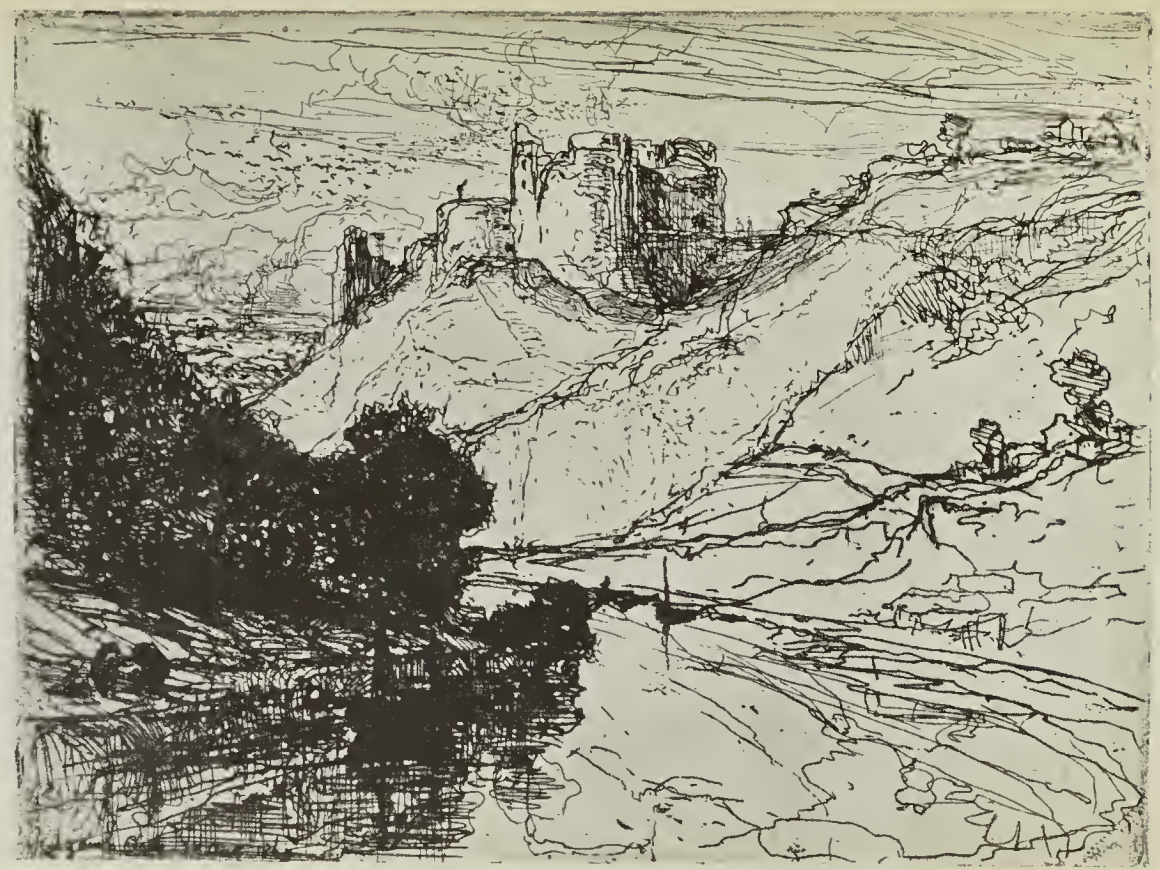
disappeared, and Whistler began working towards his discovery of the effectiveness of blank spaces, slightly tinted by a film of ink left on the plate in printing. He himself considered "Annie Haden" to be perhaps his best portrait, and "Finette," "Axenfeld" and "Leyland" are worthy to stand beside it. To this period also belong such plates as "Price's Candle Works" and "Battersea, Dawn," which show him almost at the fullest stage of his development, but the "Venice Set" of 1880, and the "Twenty-Six Etchings" of 1886, are in the style which has come to be considered "typical Whistler." Whether his earlier or later manner is the finest is entirely a matter of personal preference. The delicate, sophisticated, self-conscious etchings of the final period possess a very great charm and have had an enormous influence, and as decorative patterns they could not be surpassed, but many will prefer the more masculine, more sympathetic and profound plates of the "French Set," the "Thames Set," and the early drypoints. The later manner is perhaps seen at its best in the "Traghetto," the "Rialto" and "San Giorgio." In the famous "Turkeys," the method has been pushed a little too far, and the design is consequently somewhat lacking in cohesion. The final judgment on Whistler has perhaps not yet been made, but he is certainly one of the great masters of all time, and as certainly he has not challenged Rembrandt's position as the

greatest etcher the world has ever seen. For when technical brilliance and vision of the eye have reached the highest pitch—and in these Whistler is as great as Rembrandt—the artist must be judged by the vision of his soul. And it is here that the genius of Whistler fails, and he produces charm where Rembrandt revealed profundity, and shows the lovely surface of things where Rembrandt saw their hidden meaning.

Sir Francis Seymour Haden (1818–1910) was nearly sixteen years older than Whistler, his brother-in-law, and had made his first attempts at etching as early as 1843. But he did not take it up with real enthusiasm until he was inspired by Whistler's example. Then, in spite of the claims of his professional work as a surgeon, he produced some masterpieces of etching, and by his constant energy in preaching his views, as well as by the inspiration of his work, he did far more than Whistler to set the revival in England firmly on its path. His work was always done with extreme rapidity, and is deliberately sketchy in effect, so that it has all the freshness of the first impulse. Two of his best plates, in which suggestion is pushed to its utmost limit, are "Kilgaren Castle" and "Shepperton," the latter showing the unique effectiveness of his treatment of trees, which has since found many imitators. He was particularly good at the difficult handling of a clouded sky, as in "Out

of the Study Window" and "Sunset on the Thames." Occasionally he departed from his usual summary style, and did plates containing a good deal of careful work, as in his two most famous etchings, "The Shere Mill Pond" and the "Breaking up of the 'Agamemnon'." His reputation rests very largely on these, but in the opinion of eminent judges his finest work is to be found in the smaller plates, in "Egham Lock," "The Water Meadow," "On the Test," and above all the beautiful "Sunset in Ireland." In all these the derivation from Rembrandt is very clear, and not the least of Haden's claims to fame is that he led the way back to the Rembrandt tradition, which has proved so sound a guide to many subsequent generations. In 1880, Haden consolidated the position of etching in England by the foundation of the Royal Society of Painter-Etchers, of which he was the first President.

Among the many pupils of Legros, the most outstanding are Sir Charles Holroyd (1861–1917) and William Strang (1859–1921), and their discipleship shows clearly in their work. Strang was a very prolific etcher, producing illustrations—those to "Don Quixote" have been mentioned in the chapter on Aquatint—landscapes, fantastic designs, studies of peasant life and portraits. He varies in these from the extremely good to the definitely mediocre, but his real strength lies in the portraits. He followed Legros's example in using



Sir F. Seymour Haden

Kilgaren Castle

Etching

Van Dyck's open method, and his plates of "Emery Walker" and "Frederick Goulding" can bear comparison with the finest work of Van Dyck. Superb etchings also, classics of the art of portraiture, are "Thomas Hardy" "R. L. Stevenson," "Rudyard Kipling" and "Cosmo Hamilton."

Holroyd's work was much interrupted by his duties as Director of the National Gallery, and this perhaps accounts for the rather amateurish qualities of many of his etchings. But his work has a delicate distinction which is very attractive, and the Renaissance spirit in which it is steeped gives it a special charm. The "Icarus" series, which includes some of his finest plates, does not perhaps make so universal an appeal as his sympathetic studies of trees, such as "Borghese Trees" and "Yew Tree on Glaramara," and the thirteen prints of the "Monte Oliveto" series have caught to perfection the mediæval atmosphere of the monastery, especially in "The Ladies' Guest-House" and "Midnight Mass."

Sir Frank Short, President of the Royal Society of Painter-Etchers and Engravers, exercised an enormous influence on many generations of etchers during the years in which he was at the head of the School of Engraving in the Royal College of Art. Of all living etchers he has the most profound grasp of the secrets of the technique of all the graphic arts, and his insistence on the principle that the true etcher must also be a master-craftsman has

contributed very largely to the high standard of technical excellence which distinguishes modern work in England. But Sir Frank's etchings have very much more than technical brilliance to recommend them; he has a very sensitive apprehension of the poetry of Nature in all her moods, especially at that tranquil evening hour when the first mists rise and the first lamp shines out. His work is always full of sentiment, but it never drops into sentimentality; it expresses to perfection the spirit of enraptured quiet which fills the mind at the sight of perfect beauty. One of his earliest plates, "Low Tide, the Evening Star, and Rye's Long Pier Deserted," first struck this note, which he has sustained ever since in a series of beautiful prints such as "Strolling Players at Lydd," "Sleeping till the Flood," "Entrance to the Mersey," "Winchelsea Marshes," "Evening, Bosham." He has a great love for low-lying meadows and the long stretches of sand left by the sea, and with a very restrained use of line he gets full value from the effects of twilight and cloud drifting over the wide spaces. He handles dry-point with equal facility, and "Wintry Blast on the Stourbridge Canal" is a dramatic picture of desolation which is often considered his finest plate. Almost all Sir Frank's etchings are prizes for the collector, and among the numerous imitations of his work it must not be forgotten that he was the first to reveal a new beauty.

Sir David Young Cameron is one of the contemporary masters whose etchings have soared in price to such an extent that possession of them is for most people a hopeless dream. His earlier work is mainly architectural, strongly influenced by Meryon, but with a quite personal imaginative outlook. Only a great etcher could have produced the "Chimera of Amiens," so similar to, and yet so different from, Meryon's "Le Stryge." The "London Set" contains some remarkable plates, such as "Newgate," "Waterloo Bridge" and "The Customs House," and the "North Italian Set" is especially interesting for the views of Venice, such as "The Rialto," in which there is no trace of Whistler's influence. The "Belgian Set" includes some of his finest work, as in "The Belfry of Bruges," "Old Laroche" and "La Maison Noire, Bruges." Then there are the wonderful plates of churches, vivid with the spirit of their centuries of profound life, "St. Laumer, Blois," "Chartres," "Notre Dame, Dinant," and the splendid "Five Sisters, York Minster," one of the most valuable of all his plates. Of late he has turned more and more to landscape, in which he combines a delicate and expressive use of line with the rich shadows of dry-point in picturing the desolate beauty of the wide moors and heaped up hills of his native Scotland. "Kincardine," "Craigievar," "Ben Ledi" and "Ben Lomond" are typical examples. Auction room prices are not always an unfailing index of merit, but in the

case of Cameron's etchings the superb achievement of his finest plates perhaps almost justifies their staggering prices.

Muirhead Bone is one of the greatest modern masters of dry-point. His architectural etchings show a sense of form and structure which is natural in one who was trained as an architect, but he always manages to avoid the effect of hardness which appears to be the main pitfall of the architect turned etcher. He is strongly attracted by buildings in the process of construction or demolition, with their intricate clothing of scaffolding, and he works out the details with the utmost accuracy while never losing sight of the harmony and rhythm of his design. "Demolition of St. James's Hall," "The Great Gantry, Charing Cross" and "Building" are superb examples of his intricate and powerful draughtmanship. But though plates such as these show his most characteristic manner and are his most original contribution to the history of his art, he can also look at buildings from the point of view of Meryon. "Ayr Prison" is a masterpiece, not only of composition and chiaroscuro, but also of atmosphere—the feeling of relief as the eye passes from the shadow of the grim building to the moving figures and the wide horizon is as if we came out of the prison gates into the sunlight. His masterly command of dry-point for the rendering of atmospheric darkness is shown in such prints as "Piccadilly Circus in War Time,"

Sir D. Y. Cameron

Urquhart Castle

Etching

"A Rainy Night, Rome," and "A Spanish Festival, Ronda." Then there are his landscapes, such as "Walberswick Ferry," "Fisher's Creek" and "Ely from Dudney," as full of structural knowledge and as searching in observation as his architectural themes, and always with a feeling for the brilliant play of light and shadow over foreground trees and distant landscapes.

James McBey, who ranks with Cameron and Bone in the terrific prices which are paid for some of his best prints, is undoubtedly one of the finest modern etchers and shows an interesting development under the influence of Rembrandt, Forain and Whistler. The plates of his early "Dutch Set" are very Rembrandtesque, and yet they have the strongly individual touch of a powerful personality. They laid the foundation of his reputation, further confirmed by his prints of bull-fights and definitely established by his war-time plates of scenes in the East, when he was official artist to the troops in Palestine and Egypt. "Dawn," showing a camel patrol setting out across the desert, is a superb achievement. His "Venice Set" could hardly have been done without the example of Whistler, but it has a strength and animation which is lacking in Whistler's delicate work. Plates such as "Barcarolle" or "Sta. Maria della Fava" convey far more of the atmosphere of the city of the lagoons than do Whistler's decorative arrangements. But for many people McBey is most

himself when he is depicting little sailing boats struggling with the wild Northern seas, as in "Gale at Port Erroll," or drawn up on the flat mud-banks of a low lying coast, as in "Bosham" or "Mersea, Sunset."

Frank Brangwyn defies most of the traditions of the art of etching in his huge, vigorously drawn plates, which have none of the intimate charm which is the special appeal of etching. The breadth of conception and handling which characterises his canvases and his mural decorations is essentially unsuited to the size of the copper plate, even when a plate about four times larger than the normal is used. The design always seems too heavy for the medium, and the effect of weight is increased by the method of printing, which leaves a thick film of ink smudged on the plate. But the virility of the design and the superb draughtmanship atone to a large extent for these faults, and no one can deny the achievement of such plates as "Breaking up the 'Hannibal'," "Piazza San Spirito, Messina," or "Unloading Bricks, Ghent." Sir Alfred East, with a very different choice of subject, is some what akin to Brangwyn in his method, using a large plate and employing a great deal of foul biting.

George Clausen, to whom etching is a relaxation from painting, deals in his plates with the same country subjects—cottage, field and barn—which usually inspire his brush.

James McBey
Gale at Port Erroll
Etching

"Filling Sacks" is perhaps his best plate. Augustus John, who is also first and foremost a painter, has produced some very interesting portraits in the Rembrandt manner, of which "Tête Farouche" and "Charles McEvoy" are among the best.

F. L. Griggs, and with him Graham Sutherland and Paul Drury, have gone back to the Samuel Palmer tradition, with its further derivation from Blake and Calvert. By this it is not meant that there is anything imitative in their work; they are not directly influenced in style even to the extent which Whistler in his early work was by Jacque, or McBey in the "Venice Set" by Whistler. But the contemplative mind of the mystic has flowered again in them and inevitably its expression recalls that of the older masters of the same company. There is here no desire for rapid results, no summary method, but an infinite patience in details and a profound apprehension of the hidden beauty below the surface loveliness of things. Mr. Campbell Dodgson has written of Griggs: "As a Catholic he deplores the Reformation, as an architect the Renaissance," and his favourite subjects are imaginative reconstructions of the great Gothic buildings which were once the glory of England. It is almost impossible to realise that these cathedrals and monasteries have no existence outside their creator's mind, so perfectly is their structure realised, and so profound is the feeling of religious hush which broods over

them. Plates such as "The Minster," "The Almonry," "Ex Anglia Perdita" and "Sellenger" will not appeal to everyone, but those who care for them will grudge no sacrifice which results in their possession. Graham Sutherland in "The Meadow Chapel" and Paul Drury in "September" capture the same atmosphere with an individuality of their own.

Gerald Brockhurst also works with the most delicate finish, and his portrait heads have almost the appearance of fine pencil drawings. With its subtle modelling, its closely wrought light and shade, his work has almost the sculptural aspect of polished bronze. "Le Casaquin de Laine" and "The Amberley Boy" show his marvellous precision and searching representation.

Edmund Blampied, a native of Jersey, follows the tradition of Millet and Jacque in his etchings of peasant life. With expressive sincerity and the slenderest basis of vital draughtmanship, he pictures peasants, farm-work and the heavy farm horses set in the landscape of the land of his birth. "Loading Seaweed" and "Splashing through the Surf," show how his almost sketchy drawing can result in a wonderful feeling of solidarity.

Henry Rushbury is an architectural etcher of distinction, with a precision in detail which never becomes hard. In his actual technical achievement he follows closely in the footsteps of Muir-

head Bone, and, like Bone in "Ayr Prison," treats his architecture in close relationship with the surrounding landscape. With his needle as with his pencil he shows profound skill in rendering the surface textures as well as the solidity of massive buildings, and revels in the play of sunlight and shadow over the flat surfaces and angles of stately or crumbling façades. He is at his best in "Carcere San Gimignano."

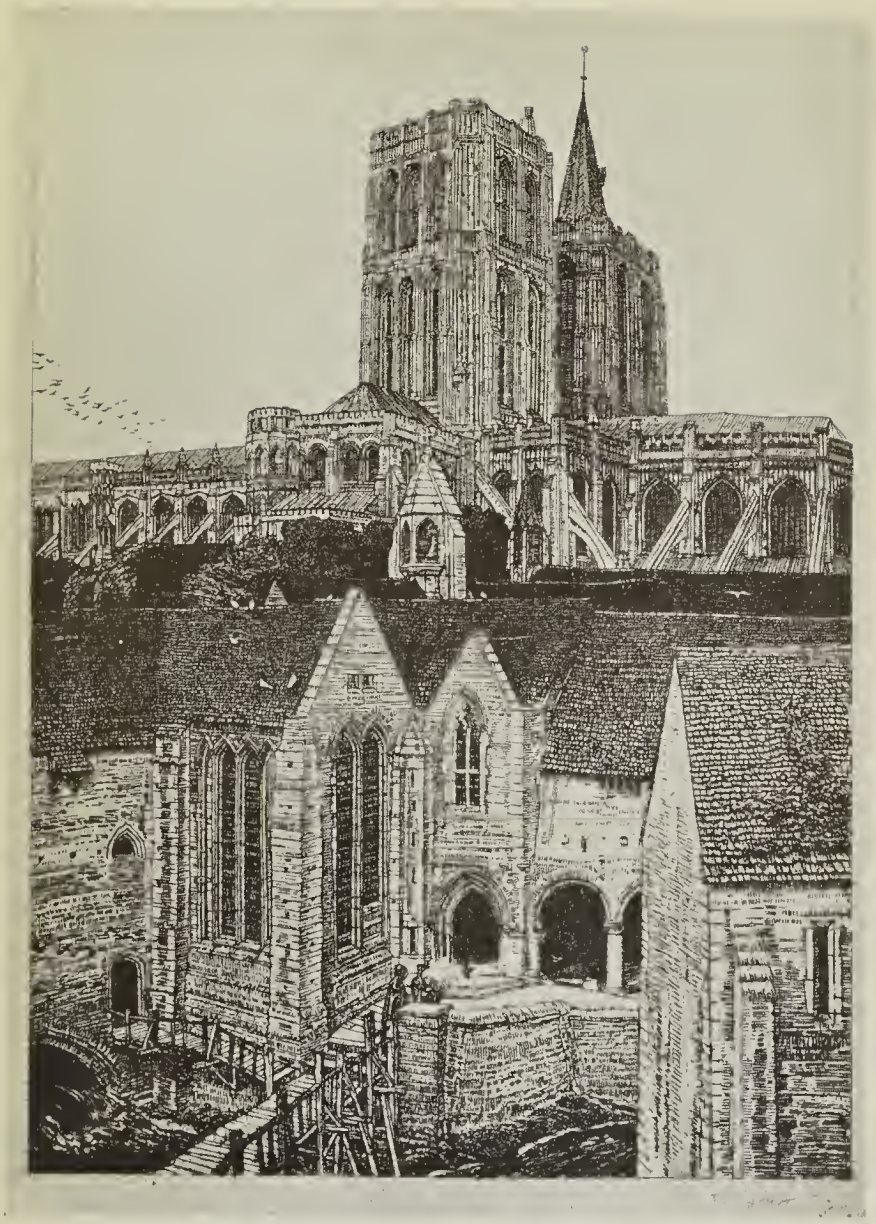
A play of sunlight, though of open light and atmosphere rather than of shadow effects, usually in the East, characterises the work of E. S. Lumsden. As his book on the subject indicates, he is clearly a master of the most intricate processes of biting, shown noticeably in plates such as "Banyan Trees." For powerful chiaroscuro work in pure etching no modern plate can surpass his "Scales."

Malcolm Osborne, who succeeded Sir Frank Short as head of the Engraving School of the Royal College of Art, has worked, like Short, in every method, but stands out by reason of his work in etching and dry-point. His early "Maggie" and his later "Nathaniel Sparks" are masterpieces of dry-point portraiture. In landscapes such as "Dordrecht" he renders mass and colour with a hint of a simplicity borrowed from Legros. Francis Dodd is another of those whose study of portraiture in dry-point can be spoken of in the same breath with Van Dyck. His

"Garden Door," with the figure in shadow against brilliant sunlight, one of his earliest and finest works, led the way to his splendid portraits of "Muirhead Bone," "Henry Rushbury," and "Charles Cundall."

Martin Hardie's landscapes are suffused with a deep and meditative tranquillity and such plates as "A Dutch Waterway—Veere," "The Sleeping Ferry," or "The Incoming Tide" make a lasting appeal. W. P. Robins expresses the richness of rural landscape and of the wind in the trees with outstanding charm, and where Robins is masterly with his trees, Arthur Briscoe is masterly with sails and rigging, and the life of those who go down to the sea in ships. Similarly, in her own special sphere dealing with bird life, Winifred Austen takes a leading place, while for the theatre there are the witty and observant plates of Walter Richard Sickert and the powerful studies, usually in etching combined with aquatint, of Laura Knight. A specialist, too, in his way, is Robert Spence, who lives in the spirit of the seventeenth century and depicts like actual scenes a series of incidents in the lives of George Fox and Samuel Pepys.

Considerations of space make it inevitable that many of the artists mentioned have been accorded slighter treatment than their merits deserve, and that many others who would hold an honourable place in a book devoted entirely to etching must be passed over here. Among those who



F. L. Griggs
Ex Anglia Perdita
Etching

must be mentioned, however briefly, are Colonel Robert Goff, E. M. Synge, C. J. Watson, Nathaniel Sparks, W. Lee-Hankey, Fred Richards, William Walcot, Stanley Anderson, Percy Gethin, Maurice and Edward Detmold, Francis Unwin, Job Nixon, Percy Smith, Allan Gwynne-Jones, A. R. Middleton Todd, C. F. Tunnicliffe and W. M. Larkins. From the work of all of these, as well as of many others who cannot be dealt with here, the collector may choose many desirable prints, at prices within the reach of all.

Etching in America has so far produced a high average level of achievement, but few outstanding personalities. Whistler has already been mentioned as being almost international rather than American. Frank Duveneck and Otto Bacher followed Whistler, but followed him so openly that they even sought their subjects in Venice. Joseph Pennell, who was Whistler's chief disciple as well as advocate and biographer, was frankly derivative from the master in his methods, but freely used those methods with vast confidence and enterprise in a wide range of subjects. In etching and in lithography he was one of the first to appreciate the dignity of Work, and the beauty and power that can be seen amid smoking chimneys and slag heaps as well as on the lagoons of Venice. It is to his credit also that he understood the romantic beauty of the skyscrapers of New York, just as Whistler, more of a poet than Pennell, had seen the evening

mist clothing the riverside with poetry and the tall chimneys becoming campanili and the warehouses as palaces in the night. It may be added that much in Pennell's work depends on his individuality of printing, and his notable skill in softening a lightly bitten line with an excess of retroussage.

One of the best known of the modern American etchers is Frank W. Benson. His favourite—almost his only—subject is wild ducks in flight, and they are drawn with great observation and arranged in most satisfying patterns, while the value of the complementary landscape is never lost sight of. A plate such as "Old Tom," etched with a vigour and freedom of method which rivals that of Anders Zorn, shows that he could attain great heights in portraiture, if he could ever tear himself from his beloved wild birds. Edward Hopper shows a remarkable grasp of the beauty to be found even in slum interiors, in the "Evening Wind" and "East Side Interior," and Levon West is a young artist whose work is full of promise, and such plates as "Pine and Sapling," "Huskies," or "Indian Mother" are refreshingly American in subject. The late Ernest Haskell, in his small plates, foreshadows by some years the work of Griggs and Sutherland, with less accomplishment but the same spirit, and the late A. B. Davies, obviously inspired by El Greco and Goya in his etchings as in his paintings, worked with much originality, using aquatint as well

as etching, on figure subjects such as "Fountain of Youth" and "The Temple."

In France the younger generation turns to the line-engraving and the woodcut more readily than to etching. Nevertheless, a great deal of interesting work has been produced since the days of the Impressionists, and at least one great master, J. L. Forain. Forain's style is unique and unmistakable; at first sight it appears as if these poignant human dramas were simply scrawled, until one realises the solidity and animation given by the apparently random lines. His subjects are mainly drawn from the law courts or from the Bible, and the depths of human anguish are plumbed in such plates as "Fille Mère," "L'Enfant Prodigue," and "Devant la Grotte—l'Imploration." If he has a fault it is that at times—like Browning in poetry—he is a little violent and tempestuous and too often energetic for energy's sake. But the sheer intensity of emotion in these plates, lithographs as well as etchings, achieved with the utmost simplicity of means, makes them unique among the work of this modern age, which is always so inclined to fear its deeper feelings and to take refuge in charming superficialities.

Albert Besnard works with a very free needle, somewhat in the manner of Anders Zorn. "Le Déjeuner" is a delightful picture of the beginning of a domestic day, and "Dans les Cendres" is full of imaginative power. Auguste Rodin's regrettably

few plates show that he is a master of the dry-point process. He has done a few wonderful portraits, notably those of Victor Hugo and Henri Becque, and some allegorical subjects, such as "La Sphère" and "La Ronde." Auguste Lepère was much more prolific in output, and though best known for his woodcuts, was an etcher whose work is frequently not accorded the recognition it deserves. "Amiens Cathedral, l'Inventaire," with its wonderful detail, avoids the deadness which mars so many modern architectural plates, and his landscapes have caught to perfection the quiet atmosphere of the country, and of the unhurried lives of those who make it their home. "Le Pommier Renversé," "Amiens from the Somme," and "Belle Matinée d'Automne" show him at his best. Other French etchers who must be mentioned are Eugène Béjot, with his plates of Paris; Marie Laurencin, whose curiously ill-drawn women have a degenerate charm; and Jacques Beurdeley, with his delicate landscapes with their autumn drift of leaves. Dunoyer de Segonzac, Derain and Vlaminck are painters who also etch, and Jean Frelaut, Adolphe Beaufrère, Ernest Laborde and Gaston de Latenay are among those whose work should hold a place in any representative collection of modern French work.

Sweden has produced one master in Anders Zorn. His technique is vigorous and sweeping, and his modelling of face and body extraordinarily

Auguste Lepère

Belle Matinée d'Automne

Etching

subtle. His best work is in his portraits—the wonderful "Renan," the elusive "Olga Bratt" and the "Self Portrait" of 1916. These rank among the great portraits of the world in their searching and sympathetic comprehension of character. He has struck out a line of his own in his studies of nude women bathed in the sunlight on sea-beach or river bank, but often the charm of these plates is marred by a feeling of straining after effect. His reputation rests largely on his portraits, and they place him among the foremost etchers of modern times.

Holland, too, owns one outstanding etcher in Marius Bauer. He has been deeply impressed by the vivid life of the East, and most of his plates are of Eastern subjects. They range in size from the minute to the extremely large. Bauer has great skill in handling complicated patterns of heavy shadows, and the figures with which his plates are often crowded are full of animation and character. "The Entrance to a Mosque," "A Sultan" and "The Entry of a Queen" illustrate his power of subordinating rich detail to the broad lines of the design.

In most of the Continental countries etching is much less popular than it is in England, and far more work is done in wood-engraving and colour aquatint. There are several individual etchers of merit, such as Käthe Kollwitz in Germany, Joseph Pankiewicz in Poland, Vladimir Silovský and Max Švabinský in Czecho-Slovakia

and Julius Komjaty in Hungary, to mention but a few, but in none of these countries has anything like a national school of etching arisen comparable to the British, or to a lesser extent, the French School. England has revenged herself for the continental record of superiority in the arts by becoming and remaining the home of etching.

CHAPTER XI

WOOD-ENGRAVING AND LINE-ENGRAVING: THE MODERN REVIVAL

THE wood-engravings which are generally known as the "illustrations of the 'sixties" form an important chapter in the history of wood-engraving in England, and are well worth the attention of the collector. Unlike the majority of the prints with which we have been dealing, they are book-illustrations, but they are included here because many prints were taken separately on India paper, and these reveal the quality of the workmanship much more clearly than the prints handicapped by the unsuitable paper of cheap magazines. They appeared for the most part in the illustrated periodicals which began at that time, and included, among much mediocre work, magnificent designs from the hands of Millais, Rossetti, Ford Madox Brown, G. J. Pinwell, Arthur Boyd Houghton and many others. These engravings are often spoken of contemptuously as "reproductive," and reproductive they were in the sense that none of the artists ever attempted to cut the block himself. The artist

drew the design upon the whitened surface of the block, and it was then sent for engraving to one of the prominent engravers, of whom the Dalziel Brothers, Joseph Swain and W. J. Linton are the best known. But this fact does not make the engravings any more "reproductive" than the woodcuts of Dürer or Holbein, which also were cut by another hand, and on the whole the engravers of the 'sixties were amazingly skilful in translating the often very difficult drawings submitted to them. Naturally the work of such very individual draughtsmen as Rossetti and Burne-Jones would be particularly troublesome to reproduce, and what the artist occasionally thought of the engraver may be gathered from a letter written in 1857 by Dante Gabriel Rosetti—"I have designed five blocks for Tennyson, save seven which are still cutting and maiming. It is a thankless task. After a fortnight's work my block goes to the engraver, like Agag delicately, and is hewn in pieces before the Lord Harry.

Address to Dalziel Brothers.
O woodman spare that block,
O gash not anyhow!
It took ten days by clock,
I'd fain protect it now.
Chorus—Wild laughter from Dalziels' Workshop."

The first of the important illustrated periodicals was "Once a Week," which was started in 1859, and formed the model for all subsequent publications of the same nature. The first number

contained wood-engravings after John Leech, John Tenniel, Millais, Charles Keene, Fred Walker and M. J. Lawless, and later volumes maintained the same high standard with contributions from Frederick Sandys, Holman Hunt, Whistler, G. J. Pinwell and George du Maurier. The same artists made the "Cornhill Magazine," which was begun in 1860 with Thackeray as editor, a rival to "Once a Week" in the excellence of its illustrations, and "Good Words," "London Society," "The Churchman's Family Magazine" and "The Sunday Magazine" are the most important of the other periodicals in which the designs of these illustrators may be found. In addition there were very many illustrated books.

It is impossible to give more than the most cursory survey of this vast quantity of fine work. Millais was undoubtedly the greatest of the illustrators, and his splendid drawings reflect perfectly the spirit of the text which they accompany. His best work is perhaps in "The Parables of Our Lord," 1863, and "The Prodigal Son" is a masterpiece. Other fine drawings may be sought for in the pages of "Once a Week," "Good Words," "The Cornhill," and "Home Affections from the Poets." In addition there are the beautiful illustrations to the Moxon edition of Tennyson published in 1857, other contributors being Holman Hunt, Rossetti, Maclise and Mulready. Rossetti did only ten book-illustrations, but they have exercised an influence out of proportion to their

number. They include "Elfen Mere," an illustration to William Allingham's "The Music Master," 1855; five drawings for the Moxon Tennyson; two for "The Goblin Market and other Poems," and two for "The Prince's Progress and other Poems," both by Christina Rossetti. Ford Madox Brown also produced very few illustrations, but among them is the splendid "Prisoner of Chillon," in Willmott's "Poets of the Nineteenth Century," 1857, a volume which also contains "Love" and "The Dream" by Millais. Frederick Sandys has always been acknowledged as second only to Millais, and his illustrations were ardently "collected" shortly after their appearance. He contributed to most of the periodicals, and in their pages may be found magnificent drawings such as "Rosamund, Queen of the Lombards," "Manoli," "Death of King Warwulf," "Harold Harfagr," "The Portent" and "Amor Mundi." In Dalziel's "Bible Gallery," published in 1880, he is represented by "Jacob Hears the Voice of the Lord." It is interesting to note that Sandys wrote in 1880: "My drawing was most perfectly cut by Swain, from my point of view, the best piece of wood-cutting of our time—mind I am not speaking of my work, but Swain's." Arthur Boyd Houghton produced an extraordinary number of drawings which maintain throughout a very high standard of excellence. His best known work is probably the illustrations to Dalziel's "Arabian Nights,"

1864, and the majority of his contributions to the periodicals of the day show his love of Eastern things and his feeling for the atmosphere of the Orient. But he was not by any means confined to one class of subject, and was equally at ease when dealing with the less subtle sentiment of the West. George John Pinwell was a most prolific worker, and some of his best drawings illustrate "Poems by Jean Ingelow," 1866. Especially fine are the seven designs for "The High Tide," in this volume, but Pinwell's work was far more difficult to translate on to the wood than that of most of his fellow illustrators, and to appreciate fully his artistic merit his original drawings must be studied.

In the engravings of the 'sixties the camera had already begun to play its part by enabling an artist's drawing to be transferred to the block by photography. In many cases the artist had become used to working on the actual surface of the block, which was polished and pleasant in colour and admirably adapted for drawings in pen or pencil, touched with white, and he preferred to continue the use of the block. Very often the engraver photographed the drawing on to another block and thus preserved the original. This accounts for the preservation, in the Victoria and Albert Museum and elsewhere, of the original drawings on wood-blocks by Millais, Leighton, Pinwell and other artists. So far the camera was a help. Later it was to

become an enemy. It was inevitable that quick and cheap reproductive processes should drive out the laborious and expensive work of the engraver.

Space forbids more than the barest mention of the work of Arthur Hughes, Frederick Walker, Walter Crane, George du Maurier, M. J. Lawless, Birket Foster, J. W. North, Simeon Solomon and Sir John Tenniel, and there are many others whose illustrations would add lustre to any collection. Book-illustration in England, and perhaps in any country, has never passed through a period of such distinction. It is a regrettable fact that the invention of photographic processes, which combine cheapness with complete faithfulness in reproduction, appears to have exercised anything but an encouraging effect on the art of illustration. The continental countries experienced a similar phase of great illustration, but the name of Gustave Doré, France's foremost illustrator of the time, cannot be put beside that of Millais or Sandys. Doré was too facile and sentimental, although his draughtsmanship was very sound, and occasionally, as in the drawings illustrating Rabelais and Balzac, he reaches a very high level. Germany, at the same period, is represented by Adolf von Menzel, the great lithographer, whose illustrations to Kugler's "History of Frederick the Great" are splendid drawings splendidly reproduced by the engraver, Unzelmann.

The modern woodcut is very different from the wood-engraving of the 'sixties, both in its outlook and in its technique. The modern revival, both here and abroad, has coincided to some extent with the modern interest in analytic, often angular design, and the modern rediscovery of "significant form." The woodcut, with its broad surfaces and sharp contrasts, is eminently adapted for the expression of these conceptions, and consequently the woodcut of to-day is far more "modern" than contemporary etchings or lithographs. Moreover, the invariable practice nowadays is for the artist to cut his own block, either with the knife on the plank-section or with the graver on the cross-grain.

The history of the modern woodcut begins with the work of the Vale Press group, which included Charles Ricketts, Charles Shannon, Lucien Pissarro and Sturge Moore. Some of their woodcuts appeared in their short-lived publication, "The Dial," and many more in the books subsequently issued by the Vale Press. Ricketts and Shannon, whose work is almost indistinguishable, turned for their inspiration to the fifteenth-century Venetian woodcuts, and their designs were done in the old black-line method, without any exploitation of what have since come to be regarded as the most characteristic and attractive qualities of the medium. Their woodcuts are often very charming, especially the illustrations to "Daphnis and Chloe."

Lucien Pissarro founded the Eragny Press, and illustrated the books he published with woodcuts done in the same manner as those of Ricketts and Shannon. The illustrations to Perrault's "La Belle au Bois Dormant" are characteristic of his delicate and decorative work. Sturge Moore is an artist of more robust calibre, and his curious designs for "The Metamorphoses of Pan" show a more deeply poetic nature allied to a much greater skill in making use of the possibilities of the wood.

Very many of the artists of to-day have taken to the woodcut for complete or occasional expression. Sydney Lee, who is well-known also for his colour-prints, has returned to Bewick's white line method, and has produced work of remarkable distinction. "Limestone Rock" is one of his best cuts. Gordon Craig has done a great many woodcuts on a very small scale, most of them reflecting his interest in stage-design. Typical and interesting examples may be found in "Woodcuts and some Words." Eric Gill's woodcuts, like his sculpture, show his amazing command of eloquent line, and though these formal, stylized designs will probably not make a wide appeal, the discriminating collector will hasten to acquire them. One of the most outstanding and most popular workers on the wood is Mrs. Gwendolen Raverat, whose work always shows an exact appreciation of the possibilities and limitations of the medium. She gets a remarkable effect of

Mrs. Raverat
The Duck Pond
Wood Engraving

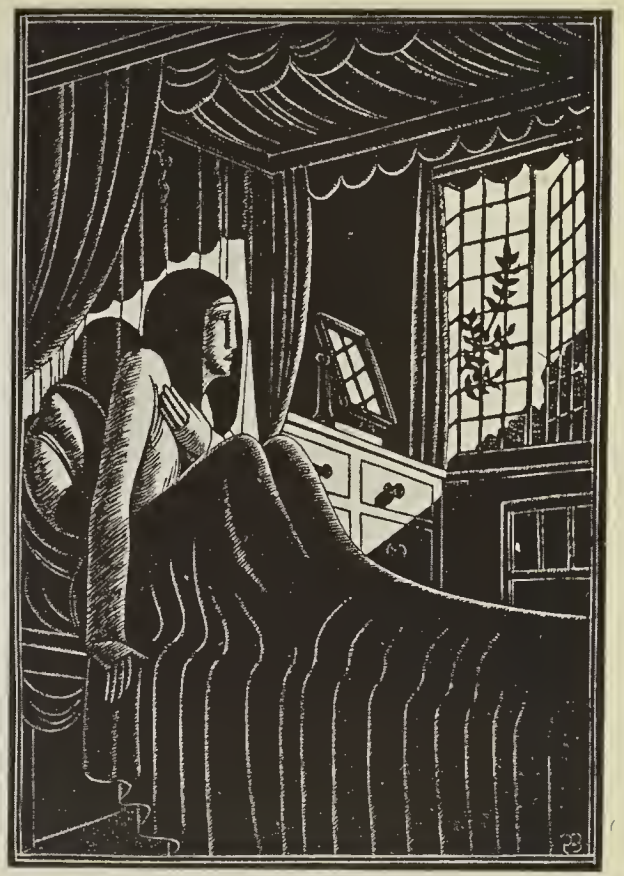
light into her small landscapes, such as "Winter Morning," "Sheep by the River" and "The Duck Pond," and her illustrations to old tales such as "The Ballad of Clerk Saunders" and "Sir Thomas Browne and Death" have received the praise of distinguished critics. Miss Clare Leighton is another gifted wood-engraver, and her recent illustrations for Thomas Hardy's "Return of the Native" seem to indicate by their increased power that her best work is still to come. The brothers Paul and John Nash are perhaps the most interesting wood-engravers of to-day. Paul Nash's genius for rhythmic pattern is seen at its best in these rather bleak woodcuts, such as "The Breakwater" or "Winter Wood," in which the effect is gained with the utmost economy of means, and the rich black surface is used to the fullest extent. John Nash has a more tranquil mind, which expresses itself in work of a more serene beauty, and his illustrations to "Poisonous Plants" are both masterly and charming. Noel Rooke is an engraver of great merit, and in his position at the Central School of Arts and Crafts has had a wide influence on the work of the younger generation, and among the many other artists who are contributing to the revival of the woodcut as a fine art are C. W. Taylor, Robert Gibbings, Eric Daglish, Bernard Rice and Miss Vivien Gribble.

In France the revival has taken a somewhat different form. There is considerably more

enthusiasm for the woodcut than in England, and a much wider attempt has been made to utilise it in its primary and natural function of accompanying type. But the difficulties of the alliance have not been countered with any greater success than in England. The old black-line woodcuts of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries agreed perfectly with the heavy type amongst which they were set, but the modern woodcut, in which so often the sharp contrasts of the medium are exploited to conceal indifferent craftmanship and design, completely overloads the page, especially when, as is usually the case, the illustrations are designed without regard to the type they are intended to adorn. Mr. Robert Gibbings, at the Golden Cockerel Press, has surmounted the difficulty by getting the engraver to design with reference to the printed page, but economic considerations make it impossible for his example to be widely followed.

Auguste Lepère played the leading part in the re-discovery of the woodcut in France. Well known for his paintings, etchings and lithographs, he found perhaps his happiest medium in the woodcut, and was as much at home in the later fashion of the black and white cut as he had been in his earlier tone engravings. "L'Abreuvoir à l'Isle Saint-Louis" is a fine example of what could be achieved by the older method. In 1896 Lepère joined Tony Beltrand and Léon Ruffe in the production of "L'Image," a periodical

JOHN NASH
Bathers
Wood Engraving



ERIC GILL
Autumn Midnight
Wood Engraving

illustrated entirely with woodcuts, and this tentative and short-lived venture paved the way for its more important successor, "Le Nouvel Imagier," a publication sponsored by the Société de la Gravure sur Bois Originale, which was founded in 1913 by M. Pierre Gusman. The engravers who contributed to the few issues of "Le Nouvel Imagier" were permitted to choose a type to harmonise with their cuts, and the result obtained was very satisfactory, although the method was impracticable for commercial purposes. Lepère designed the frontispiece to the first number, and among the other artists were Pierre Gusman, Paul-Emile Colin, J. E. Laboureur, Jacques Beltrand, F. Siméon and Robert Bonfils. Colin is one of the foremost engravers, and has a method of his own in which he uses the knife instead of of the graver on the cross-grain block. Most of his work is for book-illustration, and some of his most attractive cuts may be found in "Les Travaux et les Jours" of Hesiod, Jules Renard's "Les Philippe," and Maurice Barrès's "La Colline Inspirée," all published by Pelletan. F. Siméon is a skilful engraver with the true illustrator's happy knack of interpreting his text, and is at his best in his illustrations to Diderot's "Le Neveu de Rameau." Bonfils is another illustrator of great charm, who has made very effective use of an additional tinted block, and E. Carlègle has won a deservedly high reputation with his woodcuts for "Daphnis et Chloe" and "Lettres de la

Réligieuse Portugaise." Space forbids detailed mention of many whose work merits consideration—of P. E. Vibert, Paul Baudier, Émile Bernard, Quillivic, Louis Jou, Paul-Émile Pissarro, and the many others who have made wood-engraving the most flourishing of the graphic arts in France.

Czecho-Slovakia possesses one of the most notable schools of wood-engraving of the present day. The work of the artists of this country is refreshingly strange in outlook and free from conventional restraints—free even from the convention of the latest fashion. One of the most interesting figures is František Bílek, the sculptor, whose religious mysticism makes his art comparable to that of William Blake. "The Sun likewise has its Cross" and "A Tree Telling a Weird Tale" are typical examples of his fervent and remote art. František Kobliha is mainly an illustrator, and "The White Birds" is a beautiful and restrained design. V. Silovský, Max Švabinský, Arno Nauman and Karel Tondl are among the other artists of this country whose work should be looked for.

Finally, in the woodcut the collector has a wide and practically unexploited realm. With its demand for sheer craftsmanship, the woodcut is among the most vital achievements of present day art, but its permanent value has not yet been fully realised. The collector who will set about garnering the works of modern wood-engravers,

R. S. Austin
Before Mass
Line Engraving

both in this country and on the continent, will obtain for a comparatively small outlay a collection which will be equal to a collection of etchings in its æsthetic appeal, and in its expression of modern advancement in thought and style.

The revival of line-engraving is the most recent development in the world of graphic art, and an increasing number of artists are turning to it as a means of original expression. Sufficient time has elapsed since the great days of reproductive line-engraving for the art to have shaken itself free from the trammels of that tradition, and many of the younger engravers have come to realise that the decision, deliberateness and formality of construction which the burin claims are more suited for the expression of their personalities than the loose and nervous manner of etching popularised by Seymour Haden.

C. W. Sherborn was one of the most distinguished line-engravers of recent date. He confined himself mainly to the production of book-plates and the exquisite delicacy of his engravings on the small scale demanded by the book-plate has won for him the reputation of a modern "Little Master." Barthel Beham at his best in this type of work, as shown in the "Coat of Arms with the Hen," is not much if at all superior to the book-plate of Hubert John Greenwood or of the Burlington Fine Arts Club, by Sherborn. Sherborn's beautiful technique is rivalled in the book-plates of

J. F. Badeley, a splendid example of which is the plate for the House of Lords Library. G. W. Eve was another master of the book-plate, but he preferred to use etching rather than engraving, though his bitten line is so graver-like and controlled that at first glance his plates would be mistaken for engravings. The collecting of book-plates, which date back to the time of the earliest printed books, offers a very interesting field, especially in the German work of the sixteenth century, and provides many rewards in the beauty of some of its examples.

Stephen Gooden stands a little apart from the other line-engravers of to-day in that he has not abandoned etching for engraving, but has devoted himself to the burin from the start. Consequently, his line has more truly the engraver's quality than the line of those who approximate their engraving to the style of their previous etching. Mr. Gooden's handling of the burin is little short of marvellous in its strength and delicacy. "The Rider on the Lion" is a beautiful example, and he has recently done some fine illustrations to George Moore's "The Brook Kerith."

R. S. Austin is foremost among those who have passed from etching to engraving. It requires careful observation to distinguish his etchings from his engravings, so firm and controlled are the lines of his etching-needle, and so delicately handled are those of his burin. His work is austere without being bleak, and he never aims at

J. E. Laboureur

Le Chasseur

Line Engraving

chiaroscuro effects. As a rule he deals with figure subjects, but "Early Spring, Gloucestershire" (etching) and "Plane Tree Cottage" (engraving) are charming landscapes full of a serene simplicity. The austere severity of his style is particularly suited to the portrayal of moods of devotional calm, as in "Sisters of Assisi," "Palm Sunday" and "Woman at Prayer," and at the same time can invest with an immense dignity scenes of pure genre, such as "Woman Milking a Goat" "Before Mass" and "The Puppet Master." Mr. Austin's manner is very open to imitation, and his position at the Royal College of Art has inspired many of the younger artists to follow in his footsteps. Miss Enid Butcher is one of the most successful of his disciples. Harry Morley is another of the recruits to line-engraving, and his semi-classical allegorical subjects are becoming very popular.

In France, line-engraving has a much greater vogue than in England. J. E. Laboureur is the foremost worker in this medium, and his peculiar and entirely original technique has won for him a host of imitators. His engraving has none of the qualities of dignity and firmness which are usually considered inseparable from this medium, but is light and delicate, achieving its effect with the utmost economy of means and the most sparing choice of the essential fact. M. Laboureur was trained as a wood-engraver under Lepère, and contributed to "L'Image" in 1896.

In 1913 he took to etching, and in 1916 transferred his affections to engraving. His subjects are taken largely from contemporary life, and are treated in a light and witty manner which is essentially suited for book-illustration. His engravings for the Golden Cockerel Press edition of "The Sentimental Journey" are charming examples of a perfect alliance between the wit of the author and that of the illustrator. He has also done many still-life studies, of which "Vase de Fleurs" and "Les Tulipes rouges" are typical in their grace of line.

CHAPTER XII

HINTS FOR THE COLLECTOR

IN recent years there has been a tendency for the collecting of prints to become far too largely a question of speculative dealing. The time may come when, just as one reads in the day's "Market Prices" of "hogs unresponsive, lard in sympathy," one will read of "Camerons declining, Bones react." The day may come when we find in our morning paper that "quite a number of the rises shown in Prints were substantial, but very little stock was dislodged, and this fact tended to keep business down to somewhat disappointing proportions. One or two descriptions showed quite a fair turnover, but these were mostly the counters usually favoured by speculators." In fact, it is not so long since a Glasgow business-man published in a Scottish paper his dealings for a year on the Stock Exchange and in etchings, with results that were distinctly in favour of the latter. This book, however, is written as a handbook covering the whole field of prints, and not as a guide to speculative investment. At the same time, it may be said that well-chosen prints,

bought with a short purse as well as a long, are never likely to lose their value, if only because the world's supply is limited, and prints are becoming more and more absorbed finally in public galleries and institutions.

There are always opportunities for the man who is adventurous or enterprising enough to find or to make them. What is wanted is not the long purse but the courage of an independent mind, and the eye that can search out artistic value. There is no teacher like experience, and from a handful of etchings or woodcuts on the walls or in the "solander" the collector will obtain both knowledge and reward. As has been already indicated in this book, his scope and opportunities are unlimited. He may follow a method—etchings, lithography, colour prints, woodcuts, Baxter prints; or he may pursue a subject—portraits topography, costume, shipping, sport, and endless other quests. With regard to the two last subjects mentioned, we may remember that the horse and the sailing-ship are rapidly becoming obsolete antiques, and hence is coming a rarity in sporting and shipping prints, with a rise in value, which will inevitably increase in the future. Just as an indication it may be noted that in July, 1928, 4,700 guineas was paid at Sotheby's for the portrait in oil of the Old Berkeley Huntsman, Thomas Oldaker, on his favourite chestnut, Brush, by J. N. Sartorius. The highest price for a Sartorius before that was 1,110 guineas

in 1920 for his "Meet of Foxhounds," and the largest previous sum paid for any single hunting picture was 4,000 guineas for Ben Marshall's "Mr. Fermor's Hounds." And the sporting prints after Pollard, Alken and the rest are noticeably in sympathy, as lard with bacon.

It is for the collector to seek out his own line. A well-known print-seller, for instance, a man of wide experience, has recently retired and is devoting his whole time to the collecting of prints by Hollar. As Hollar executed about three thousand etchings, there is ample variety and opportunity, not only for acquiring new prints, but for finding a better impression to replace an inferior one. Many Hollar prints can be bought for shillings, a good many in the neighbourhood of £1, and the few rarer and finer examples for a few pounds apiece. On the other hand, to become the owner of a really fine collection of Dürers, like that of Mr. T. D. Barlow, demands a large expenditure, when the finest examples may cost hundreds of pounds apiece. The collector of Rembrandt, if he wishes to own a "Clement de Jonghe," a "Jan Six," or a "Three Trees," must be a man of comparative wealth. At the same time, the man of modest means may acquire fifty Rembrandt etchings, and fairly good impressions of them, at prices under £50 apiece, in fact at a less price than he pays for etchings by Cameron, Bone and McBey. And he will be making a very safe investment for his money.

The tendency with all prints, modern and old, is for the few best in each artist's *œuvre* to rise enormously in value, and for the others to drop. Critical opinion gradually sorts out the best, as it has already done with the older masters, and as it is now doing with, say, Whistler, Haden, Cameron and the rest. Twenty pounds or less will still buy examples of Whistler or Rembrandt, though the "Traghetto" or "Turkeys" will cost hundreds. Haden's "Sunset on the Thames" and "Sunset in Ireland" were purchasable twenty years ago for a few pounds apiece. Haden etchings, but not those, can still be bought for a few pounds. The "Shere Mill Pond" and "Wreck of the Agamemnon," once so prized—largely, one feels, for their ambitious effort and large size—have dropped. Enormous prices are paid for Cameron's "Ben Ledi" and "Five Sisters, York" (over £650 for the latter in 1929, the highest price yet paid for a modern etching), for Bone's "Ayr Prison" and McBey's "Dawn"; and the discrepancy between the price of these and the rest of their works is quite unreasonable. It seems absurd to think that the present capital value of the original thirty proofs of the "Five Sisters, York," published at eight guineas each in 1907, is £19,500, and that the present capital value of the seventy proofs of McBey's "Dawn" is about £30,000! The discriminating collector, with real knowledge, should recognise, obtain at once, and hold securely, the print that he feels will be

acclaimed as a masterpiece later; but he may also feel that even in the more unimportant work the hand of the master is still there.

The true lover of prints, however, is not affected by values except in so far as they bear upon his own resources. He is interested, not merely in the pictorial and technical aspects of the print itself, but in the paper and in any marks or notes that it may bear. Very often he will find in the margin or on the back some name or monogram or cipher denoting a previous, and often old, ownership. All the information about these is gathered in F. Lugt's "Les Marques de Collections de dessins et d'estampes" (Amsterdam, 1921). The student will take pleasure also in the mellow colour of old paper with its tones of ivory or gold, a colour that no stain or pigment can imitate; and he will enjoy the picturesque surface, and the wire-marks from the wire mould on which the rag pulp is laid in the making, that give character to old hand-made paper. Modern reprints of old etchings, and particularly of colour prints, are often "given away" by the thick nineteenth century paper of a "cartridge" type on which they are printed. And the collector should take note also of the water-marks. A book such as Briquet's monumental work, "Les Filigranes" (Paris, 1907) in four volumes, with over 16,000 facsimiles, is full, not only of historical and sentimental interest, but of practical value. More and more the study of water-marks has become a

science, of immense value in fixing dates and states. Research, such as that made by Mr. T. D. Barlow on Dürer, by Wibiral and (quite recently) Colonel Cardew on Vandyck, or by Mr. A. J. Finberg on Turner's "Liber Studiorum," to take a few out of many examples, has thrown much new light on artists' works and on varieties of state.

When we are interested in prints and paper, we become interested in the diseases from which paper suffers. Chief among these are mildew and "foxing." Mildew is a surface fungus, a sort of white fluff, that can be readily removed with a silk handkerchief or a camel's hair brush. It is, of course, due to damp, though a print, particularly a mezzotint, where there is a thick quantity of surface ink, will frequently show signs of mildew even when kept enclosed in a dry cabinet. Paper apparently likes to breathe, and the occasional airing of prints kept in boxes, portfolios, or cabinets, is of some importance. "Foxing," the development of iron-coloured spots, is a more insidious and unexplained disease caused by some unknown germ. It may arise from some chemical impurity, but is certainly encouraged and fostered by damp and by sudden changes of temperature that cause dampness in the air. One main origin of "foxing" is the use of a mount made of a cheap pulp or of inferior mill-board, and nearly always a frame-maker, unless he is carefully instructed, will use a good front for his mount, but a cheap card-

board behind. There is no economy more false than this. If anything, it is the back that should be of the purest paper, for the whole print rests against the back sheet of the mount, while the front of the mount merely clips its edges. It is from the inferior backing sheet that disease so often spreads, in the case both of prints and of water-colours. Foxing, again, is often caused by the too close proximity of a cheap, immature wood with resinous knots, or by the application of an impure paste or gum over the whole back of the print—an unforgivable sin of which ignorant frame-makers are still guilty. The disease begins in wood or mount and soon spreads to the print. Innumerable prints have been spoiled by ignorance and carelessness in mounting and framing. Prevention is better than cure, though it is possible to eradicate foxing, and anyone who is interested in making practical experiments should obtain the pamphlets on "The Cleaning and Restoration of Museum Exhibits," by Dr. Alexander Scott, F.R.S., of the British Museum Laboratory. The old method, practised by many generations, was to immerse the print in chloride of lime solution (*liquor chloris calcis*), with one part of chloride to forty of water, applying, when necessary, a stronger solution to separate places. The danger, of course, lies in the fact that the bleaching agent may make the paper dangerously soft and tender. It is essential, therefore, after washing a print in chloride of lime, to soak it for a short time in a

weak solution of hydrochloric acid, about a tea-spoonful to a dish of water. This stops any possible ill-effects of the lime. This is a simple method which has proved effective in the past, but those who wish to follow the latest methods of science will try the more difficult and more complicated method which Dr. Scott advocates, of treatment in the vapour of hydrogen peroxide.

The amateur who is collecting, say, historical portraits or topographical prints at small prices may well make experiments in cleaning, but when a print is worth £5 or more, it is much better to take no risks and to have the print cleaned, at a moderate outlay, by a reliable expert.

Then we come to the question of mounting and storage. As has been said, a print should *never* be mounted solid, *i.e.*, with a covering of paste or adhesive matter on the back. Nothing is more calculated to spoil its appearance and ruin its value. It shoud be fixed on the back mount with little hinges, such as those used by stamp collectors, at the top or the sides, and should hang quite loose. The collector should have no dealings with any frame-maker who does not follow these methods; and he should insist on the frame-maker using the best quality of cardboard, or cardboard with a covering of hand-made paper, for the back.

It is advisable for the collector to keep his prints in mounts of a standard size. One of the standard sizes in which paper is made, such as

"half-imperial" (about 21 by 18 inches) is convenient for the majority of prints. If he owns some frames with movable backs he can readily change, from time to time, what he selects for hanging on his walls, though for most collectors their real pleasure is in holding a print lovingly in their hands, and lifting the mount to study paper and margins, and the notes that they, or others, have added. From this point of view, the main advantage of the uniform size is that prints can be stored in uniform boxes or "solanders." And it is not out of place to mention that the term "solander," which puzzles many people, comes from the name of the Swedish botanist, J. C. Solander (1736–82), who invented a special form of box to hold botanical specimens, papers, maps, etc. The term was in ordinary use almost in his lifetime, for Cowper wrote to Lady Hesketh in 1788: "I shall be as happy in the arrival of my Solander as he whose name it bears was to arrive once more in England after his circumnavigation." A portfolio costs less, but holds less; does not allow prints to rest in such an even pile; and causes much more trouble by admitting dust which, in the case of portfolio-kept prints, often makes a definite stain of an inch or so along the edges of the mounts. A properly made print-box, or "solander," with overlapping edges of the lid, is much more dust-proof.

Turning over the prints in our box or portfolio we ponder again about various marks, problems

of state, and questions of signature—things that did not trouble the old and learned and leisured collector of the past so much as they necessarily do the collector of to-day. Mr. Richard Gutekunst, who, before the War, was not merely an honest print-seller but a good friend and guide to many collectors, has recently published a pamphlet, "About Signed and Unsigned Etchings," in which he points out that the younger collector, being without the shrewdness and knowledge of the collectors of the old school, has still to acquire his experience, and, knowing this, is naturally suspicious and sceptical. He is, for instance, inclined to attach an absurdly overrated importance to the question of an artist's signature being affixed to an original etching. On this point it should be remembered that the signing of proofs in autograph under the actual print did not become common until about 1880. No one expects to possess signed proofs of etchings by Rembrandt, or Claude, or by Millet, Jacque, Corot, or Meryon, unless they are proofs sent by the artist to some friend with a written dedication. But with artists towards the close of the nineteenth century, who lived in what may be called a transitional period of signing, some difficulty arises. If we search for a reason why artists at this period began to affix signatures, it may be explained by several causes: first, it was the period when the professional printer was busy at work, printing edition after edition, only

partially, if at all, in the artist's presence. Most of these printers, like Goulding, were honest; but there was nothing to prevent a dishonest printer pulling a few extra proofs; and even where a printer was honest, some extra proofs might be mislaid or go astray. Hence the artist began to add his signature as evidence that the proof was authoritatively issued by himself. Then, when it was realised that the signature was a pretty and personal addition, American collectors and dealers began to demand signed proofs, and the artist's friends asked for an autograph signature, as they might have asked an author friend to sign his book. That being so, it does not follow that the absence of a signature means a mark of an inferior impression. Haden etchings, for instance, are not always signed, and, as Dr. Nazeby Harrington has pointed out, the greater number of the impressions from Haden's plates left at his death were unsigned, though among them were very choice and early proofs. Frequently, he did not sign an impression until he actually sold it. Haden's "Études à l'Eau Forte," published in Paris in 1865–6, consisted of an edition of one hundred and eighty copies, and contained many of his most valuable and desirable plates, such as "Sunset in Ireland," "Shere Mill Pond," etc. Some sets, coming later into the market, were signed on request, by Sir Seymour Haden, on payment of a fee of 20–25 guineas, and he would occasionally sign single proofs for a fee of one

guinea. But the signed proofs are no better as etchings, and the signatures, in the case of Haden, are often to be regarded with suspicion. In the case of Samuel Palmer, for exactly similar reasons, many of his finest proofs are unsigned, and his signature, when it occurs, often gives a quite fictitious value. Whistler did not always sign—the "Paris Set" and the "Thames Set" were unsigned—though his later habit of cutting down his etchings to the plate-mark, and leaving a little tab with his butterfly monogram, may have contributed to the movement in favour of signatures. This butterfly signature appeared for the first time in the first "Venice Set," published in 1880. Large numbers of plates by Legros were issued without signature, and there are very few signed proofs of Fantin-Latour's lithographs. Zorn, whose first etching was produced in 1882, was one of the first modern artists to make a practice of signing his prints, and in the case of Zorn and other later etchers, such as Lepère, Cameron, Short, Bone, McBey, etc., the collector will rightly demand a signed impression. He should be suspicious, rather than pleased, if he finds etchings with signatures purporting to be those of Millet, Corot, Rousseau, Meryon, or Manet. He must remember that the signature is a secondary matter only, and that what matters most is the quality of impression which can be judged from continual study of prints by the trained eye.

Towards the close of the nineteenth century also began the limited edition, usually of from fifty to one hundred impressions. This limitation, often quite artificial in the case of a print which might well yield fifty more perfect impressions, was favourable, from a commercial point of view, to the artist or to the print-seller, and was the beginning of much speculative investment. The law of supply and demand began to enter, for if there are fifty proofs published at £2 2*s*., and only forty people want one, the price remains fair, and steady, at £2 2*s*. But if there are fifty proofs and seventy-five people—American collectors among them—each want a proof, the price becomes anything! As a part of this limitation, a great many etchers, beginning with those of France, started not merely to sign, but to number their prints. Etchings by Lepère, for instance, may be signed "1er Etat, 6/9," or "2me Etat, 15/20," an admirable method which records briefly the whole history of the impression. There are arguments for and against this procedure in letters contributed to the "Bookman's Journal," 1923–4, in which Mr. Ambrose Jones, Mr. Campbell Dodgson, Mr. W. P. Robins, Mr. Sydney Lee, Mr. Martin Hardie, and Mr. Hardie's cat all took a part. Into the advantages and objections we need not enter here, but it is necessary for the collector to understand quite clearly that such numbering on a print never implies an actual sequence of printing. No etcher will ever number

the proofs in the exact order as they come from the press, and number 59/60 may be a better impression of finer quality than 1/60. Even though this is known, such is human nature that most of us will shrink from being allotted number 99/100, even though it was printed before the 3/100, which the dealer will describe as a "brilliant early impression."

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INDEX

Ackermann, Rudolph, 114, 155, 156, 157, 159, 160, 195
Aldegrever, Heinrich, 57, 58
Alix, P. M., 180
Alken, Henry, 115, 259
Allen, J. B., 90
Altdorfer, Albrecht, 24, 55, 95, 167, 186
Amman, Jost, 30, 96
Anderson, Stanley, 235
Andrea, Zoan, 45
Anquetin, 202
Arndes, Stephan, 22
Arundel, Earl of, 67, 99
Audran, Benoit, 79, 80
—, Gérard, 79
Austen, Winifred, 234
Austin, R. S., 254, 255
Aveline, P., 79

Badeley, J. F., 254
Bacher, Otto, 235
Bakhuysen, Ludolph, 110
Baldung, Hans, 167
Bandinelli, 55
Baquoy, J. C., 85
Barney, W. W., 174
Baron, B., 74
Bartolozzi, Francesco, 144, 145, 146, 174, 175
Basire, James, 87, 89
Baskett, C. H., 164
Baudier, Paul, 252
Baudouin, P. A., 82, 83
Bauer, Marius, 239
Baxter, George, 167, 170, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184
Beardsley, Aubrey, 209
Beaufrère, Adolphe, 238
Beckett, Isaac, 123, 124
Becker, Harry, 207
Beechey, Sir William, 132, 147,
Bega, Cornelis, 109
Beggerstaff Brothers (William Nicholson and James Pryde), 209
Beham, Barthel, 56, 58, 253
—, Hans Sebald, 56, 58, 95
Beilby, Ralph, 31
Béjot, Eugène, 238
Bellini, 46
Bellows, George, 207
Beltrand, Camille, 190
Beltrand, Jacques, 251
Beltrand, Tony, 250
Benson, Frank W., 236
Berchem, Nicholas, 109
Bernard, Émile, 252
Besnard, Albert, 237
Beurdeley, Jacques, 238
Bewick, John, 31
Bewick, Thomas, 30, 32, 33, 88, 194, 248
Bigg, W. R., 147
Bílek, Františ̌ek, 252
Blake, William, 33, 34, 60, 87, 88, 89, 144, 187, 191, 194, 219, 231
Blampied, Edmund, 232
Bléry, Eugène, 214
Blockbooks, 20
Bloemaert, Abraham, 167
Blondel, 169
Blooteling, Abraham, 122, 123
Bone, Muirhead, 228, 232, 259, 260, 268
Bonfils, Robert, 251
Bolswert, Boëtius a, 67
—, Schelte a, 67
Bonington, R. P., 196, 197
Bonnard, Pierre, 202, 209
Bonnet, Louis Marin, 143, 176
Boucher, François, 78, 79, 144, 153, 176, 177

Boys, T. S., 195
Brueghel the Elder, 65, 97
Brockhurst, Gerald, 232
Brooks, John, 126
Brouwer, A., 68
Brown, Ford Madox, 241, 244
Browne, Hablot Knight, 115
Briscoe, Arthur, 234
Bracquemond, Félix, 215, 216, 219
Brandard, R., 90
Brangwyn, Frank, 112, 204, 207, 209, 230
Bunbury, A. W., 156
Burchell, W. J., 160
Burgkmair, H., 24, 26, 29
Burne-Jones, Sir E., 242
Businck, Louis, 167
Butcher, Enid, 255

Callot, Jacques, 95, 97, 98
Calvert, Edward, 33, 34, 219, 231
Cameron, Sir D. Y., 214, 227, 228, 259, 260, 268
Campagnola, Giulio, 46
Canale, Antonio (Canaletto), 110, 111, 112
Caracci, Agostino, 65
Cardon, Anthony, 147
Carlègle, E., 251
Cars, Laurent, 79, 80, 84
Cattermole, George, 195
Chardin, J. B. S., 80
Chapuy, J. B., 179
Charlet, N. T., 195, 196
Chatelain, J. B. C., 76
Cheeseman, T., 146
Chéret, J., 209
Chevalier, Guillaume Sulpice, 198, 199
Choffard, P. P., 84, 87
Cicéri, Eugène, 197
Cipriani, 144, 145, 174
Claude; *see* Gellée
Clausen, Sir George, 230
Cochin, C. N., 79, 80, 87
Cock, Hieronymous, 64
Colin, Paul-Émile, 251
Condé, John, 147
Constable, John, 138, 154
Cooke, W. B., 89
Copley, John, 204, 205
Coqueret, P. C., 180
Coriolano, Bartolomeo, 167
Corot, Camille, 200, 212, 213, 266, 268
Correggio, 124
Cort, Cornelis, 65
Cosway, Richard, 147, 175
Cotman, John Sell, 115, 117, 211
Courbet, G., 200
Cousins, Samuel, 133, 134, 149
Cox, David, 158
Craig, Gordon, 248
Cranach, Lucas, 24, 27, 29, 35, 167
Crane, Walter, 246
Crome, John, 115, 117, 211, 212
Cruickshank, George, 115
Cuyp, Aelbert, 102, 109

da Brescia, Giovanni Antonio, 46
da Carpi, Ugo, 29, 30, 167, 168
Daglish, Eric, 249
Dagoty, Jacques Gautier, 172, 173, 176
Dahl, M., 124
Dalziel Brothers, 242
da Modena, Nicoletto, 46
Daniell, Rev., E. T., 118
Daniell, Thos., 161
Daniell, Wm., 159, 161
Daubigny, C. F., 212, 213
Daumier, Honoré, 198, 199
David, J. L., 86
Davies, A. B., 236
da Vinci, Leonardo, 46, 113
Dawson, Nelson, 186
Dayes, Edward, 147, 156
de Barbari, Jacopo, 46, 47, 48
Debucourt, L. P., 178, 179, 185
de Bry, Theodor, 58, 71
Decamps, Alexandre, 211
de Champaigne, Philippe, 69, 70
de Hooch, Pieter, 102
de Jode, Pieter, 67
Delacroix, Eugène, 161, 162, 197, 211
de Larmessin, N., 80
Delâtre, 215, 220
de Latenay, Gaston, 238
Delaune, Étienne, 60
de Launay, Nicolas, 82, 83, 84
de Launay, R., 85
Delignon, J. L., 83
Demarteau, Gilles, 143, 144, 176
de Negker, Jost, 29, 167

Deni, M, 83.
Denis, Maurice, 202
de Passe, Crispin, 65
—, Crispin II, 65
—, Crispin III, 65
—, Madeleine, 65
—, Simon, 65
—, Willem, 65, 72
Dequevauviller, N. B. F., 83
Derain, A., 238
de Ribera, José, 97, 121
Descourtis, Charles-Melchior, 179
de Segonzac, Dunoyer, 238
Desrais, C. L., 179
de St. Aubin, Augustin, 84
de St. Non, Jean Claude Richard, 152
Detmold, Edward, 235
—, Maurice, 235
Devéria, A., 197
De Wint, Peter, 139, 140
Dickinson, William, 129
Dighton, Richard, 115
—, Robert, 115
Dillon, 202
Dixon, John, 128
Dodd, Francis, 233
Doré, Gustav, 246
Dotted Prints, 23
Dou, Gerard, 81, 102
Dransy, 210
Drevet, Pierre, 71
—, Pierre Imbert, 71
Drury, Paul, 231, 232
Duclos, A. J., 84
Dujardin, Karel, 109
du Maurier, George, 243, 246
Dürer, Albrecht, 24, 25, 26, 38, 40, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 52, 53, 54, 56, 60, 61, 62, 65, 94, 95, 96, 242, 259, 262
Dusart, Cornelis, 109
Duveneck, Frank, 235
Duvet, Jean, 60
d'Ylen, Jean, 210

Earlom, Richard, 125, 134
East, Sir Alfred, 230
Edelinck, Gerard, 70
Eisen, Charles, 87
El Greco, 236
Ellis, Sir Henry, 161
Elstrack, Renold, 72
Eve, G. W., 254
Evelyn, John, 121

Faber, John, 124
Facius, J. G., 147
Faithorne, William, 72, 99
Fantin-Latour, 200, 202, 203, 268
Fielding, T.H., 156, 159
Finiguerra, Maso, 41, 42
Finnie, John, 140
Fisher, Edward, 128
Flight, Claude, 189
Flindt, P., 58, 59
Flipart, J. J., 80
Floding, Per Gustav, 152
Flötner, P., 59
Forain, J. L., 201, 202, 205, 209, 229, 237
Ford, Michael, 126
Forrest, C. R., 161
Foster, Birket, 246
Fragonard, J. H., 78, 82, 177
Francia, Francesco, 53
François, J. C., 143, 144, 176
Fraser, Lovat, 209
Frelaut, Jean, 238
Freudeberg, Sigismund, 84, 85
Fuseli, H., 194
Fust and Schoeffer, 165
FVB, 61

Gabain, Ethel, 192, 205, 206
Gainsborough, T., 122, 126, 129, 174
Galle, Cornelis, 66, 70
Gaskell, Percival, 140, 164
Gaugain, Thos., 147, 175
Gavarni, *see* Chevalier, G.S., 198, 199
Graf, Urs., 94, 96
Geddes, Andrew, 115, 116, 211
Gellée, Claude (Lorrain), 76, 98, 99, 112, 125, 134, 266
Geminus, Thomas, 71
Géricault, J. L. A. T., 196, 197
Gethin, Percy, 235
Gibbings,, Robert, 249, 250
Giles, Wm., 187, 188
Giorgione, 46
Gill, Eric, 248
Gillot, Claude, 86
Gillray, James, 75, 113, 114, 115, 156

Girtin, Thomas, 115, 116, 156, 160, 211
Glover, George, 72
Goff, Colonel Robert, 235
Goltzius, Hendrik, 65
Goodall, E., 90
Gooden, Stephen, 254
Goya, Francisco, 161, 162, 163, 217, 236
Gravelot, Hubert François, 86
Green, Valentine, 128, 129
Greuze, J. B., 80, 132
Greville, Hon. Charles, 153
Gribble, Vivien, 249
Griggs, F. L., 231, 236
Grisoni, G., 124
Gusman, Pierre, 251
Guttenberg, Carl, 85
Guyot, Laurent, 179
Gwynne-Jones, Allan, 235

Haden, Sir F. Seymour, 92, 219, 223, 224, 253, 260, 267, 268
Hals, Frans, 68, 102
Hardie, Martin, 234
Harding, J. D., 194, 195, 196, 197
Hardy, J., 160
Hartley, Alfred, 164, 186
Hartrick, A. S., 207
Haskell, Ernest, 236
Hassell, John, 159
Havell, Wm., 159
Hearne, T., 194
Helman, J. S., 85
Heriot, George, 160
Herrick, F. C., 209
Hiroshige, 187
Hirschvogel, Augustin, 95
Hirst, Norman, 140
Hirtz, H., 59
Hobbema, 102, 135
Hogarth, William, 74, 113, 114, 125
Hogenberg, Franz, 71
Hohlwein, L., 210
Hokusai, 187
Holbein, Hans, 24, 27, 28, 242
Hollar, Wenceslaus, 99, 215, 259
Holroyd, Sir Charles, 224, 225
Hondius, Jodocus, 71
Hopfer, Daniel, 96
—, Hieronymus, 96
—, Lambert, 96
Hopper, Edward, 236
Hoppner, John, 131, 132, 133, 174
Houghton, Arthur Boyd, 241, 244
Houston, Richard, 126, 127, 128
Hudson, T., 127
Huet, Paul, 197
Hughes, Arthur, 246
Hunt, Holman, 243
Hysing, H., 123

Isaac, P. A., 190
Isabey. E., 196, 197

Jackson, F. Ernest, 204, 206
Jackson, J. B., 168, 169, 182
Jacque, Charles, 212, 218, 221, 231, 232, 266
Jacquemart, Jules, 100, 215
Jacquin, A., 190
Janinet, F., 155, 177, 178, 179
Janssen, Cornelis, 72
Jeghers, Christoffel, 30
John, Augustus, 207, 231
Jones, John, 128, 129, 148, 174
Jongkind, J. B., 216
Jou, Louis, 252
Joullain, F., 79
Jukes, Francis, 155, 176

Kauffer, Mc. Knight, 209
Kauffmann, Angelica, 144, 145, 174
Keating, George, 132
Keene, Charles, 243
Kerr, Lawson, J., 207
Kerseboom, F., 124
Kirkall, Edward, 167, 168, 182
Knapton, Charles, 168
Kneller, Sir G., 70, 123, 124, 125
Knight, Charles, 146, 147, 175
Knight, Laura, 164, 234
Kobliha, František, 252
Kollwitz, Käthe, 239
Komjaty, Julius, 240

Laborde, Ernest, 238
Laboureur, J. E., 251, 255
Laechlin, H. C., 59
Lalanne, Maxime, 216
Lancret, N., 78, 80, 81

Larkins, W. M., 235
Lasinio, Carlo, 173
Lastman, P., 102
Laurencin, Marie, 238
Laurenson, E. L., 185
Lautensack, H. S., 95
Lavreince, N. 82, 83, 177, 179
Lawless, M. J., 243, 246
Lawrence, Sir Thos., 132, 133, 174
Lebas, J. P., 80, 144
Le Blon, J. B., 171, 172, 176
Le Blond, Abraham, 183
Le Brun, Charles, 70
Lecoeur, Louis, 179
Lee, Sydney, 188, 248
Leech, John, 243
Lee-Hankey, Wm., 185, 235
Leeu, Gerard, 22
Legros, Alphonse, 217, 218, 219, 224, 233
Leighton, Clare, 249
Leighton, Lord, 245
Lely, Sir Peter, 123, 127, 129
Lemoine, 177
Lepère, Auguste, 202, 238, 250, 251, 255, 268, 269
le Prince, J. B., 152, 153, 154
Le Sueur, Vincent, 168
Lewis, F. C., 135, 157, 160
Linton, W. J., 242
Little Masters, 55, 58, 62
Loggan, David, 73
Lombart, Pierre, 76, 77
Lord, Elyse, 189
Lorrain, Claude; *see* Gellée
Lucas, David, 138, 139, 140
Lumsden, E. S., 233
Lunois, Alexandre, 201
Lupton, T., 135
Luttrell, Edward, 123

Mabuse, 52, 57, 65
Macbeth-Raeburn, H., 140
Mackie, Charles, 189
Mackenzie, F., 156
Maclise, Daniel, 243
Major, Thomas, 76
Malbeste, G., 85
Mallet, J. B., 179
Malton, James, 158, 159
Malton, T., 156, 159
Manet, Édouard, 201, 218, 268
Manning, W. Westley, 164
Mantegna, 44, 45, 46, 48, 62
Marcantonio; *see* Raimondi
Marchant, Guyot, 28
Marriott, F., 186
Marshall, Ben, 259
Martini, P. A., 85
Masson, Antoine, 71
Master of the Amsterdam Cabinet, 40
Master, E, S., of. 1466, 38, 39, 40, 58, 61
Master of the Playing Cards, 37
Master of the Sforza Book, of. Hours, 46
Master of Zwolle, 50
—, 1446, 38
—, 1551, 58
McArdell, James, 126, 127, 128
McBey, James, 229, 231, 259, 260, 268
Mellan, Claude, 68, 70, 72
Menzel, Adolf von, 208, 246
Meryon, Charles, 113, 213, 214, 215, 218, 220, 221, 227, 228, 266, 268
Metzu, G., 82
Meyer, Henry, 132
Michelangelo, 54
Mignard, N., 71
Mignot, D., 58
Miller, Andrew, 126
—, W., 90
Millais, Sir J. E., 241, 243, 244, 245, 246
Millet, J. F., 200, 212, 213, 217, 232, 266, 268
Mocetto, Girolamo, 46
Moreau, J. B., 83
—, Jean Michel (Moreau le jeune), 84, 85, 86, 87
Morier, J. J., 160
Morin, Jean, 69, 70
Morland, George, 131, 147, 148, 149, 174, 175
Morley, Harry, 255
Moore, Sturge, 247, 248
Mouchet, 179
Mulready, W., 243

Nanteuil, Celestin, 197
—, Robert, 69, 70, 71, 72, 81

Nash, J., 156, 157
—, John, 249
—, Paul, 249
Nattes, J. C., 160
Nauman, Arno, 252
Nicholson, Wm., 209
Nixon, Job, 235
Nooms, Reynier, 110
North, J. W., 246
Northcote, J., 175
Nutter, W., 175

Opie, J., 129
Orme, Edward, 160
Osborne, Malcolm, 233
Ostade, Adriaen van, 68, 108, 109
Oudry, J. B., 86
Owen, S., 159

Palmer, Samuel, 33, 219, 231, 268
Pankiewicz, Joseph, 239
Papillon, Jean Michel, 31, 168,169
Park, Thos., 132
Parmegiano, 30, 97, 170
Pater, J. B. J., 78
Patinir, 65
Peake, James, 76
Pencz, Georg, 56, 58
Pennell, Joseph, 193, 203, 204, 207, 235, 236
Pesne, Antoine, 81
Peter, R. C., 140
Peters, W. O., 129
Petter, William, 127
Pfister, Albrecht, 22
Phillips, Charles, 132
Pinwell, G, J., 241, 243, 245
Piranesi, Francesco, 113
Piranesi, G. B., 110, 112, 214
Piranesi, Pietro, 113
Pissarro, Camille, 218
Pissarro, Lucien, 190, 247, 248
—, Paul-Émile, 252
Platt, J. E., 189
Pollaiuolo, Antonio, 43, 44, 45
Pollard, J. 259
Ponce, Nicholas, 83
Pond, Arthur, 168
Pontius, Paul, 67
Potter, Paul, 102, 109
Pratt, J. B., 140
Prout, Samuel, 158, 194, 196, 197
Pryde, James, 209
Pryse, Spencer, 193, 204, 206, 209
Pugh, Edward, 159
Pugin, A., 156, 157
Purcell, Richard, 126
Pyne, W. H., 156

Q., G., 152
Quillivic, 252

Raeburn, 129, 132, 140
Raffet, D. A. M., 195, 196
Raimondi, Marcantonio, 46, 52, 53, 54, 55, 62, 63, 66
Ramsay, Allan, 127
Raphael, 30, 54, 62, 66, 168
Ratdolt, Erhard, 165
Ravenet, S. F., 74
Raverat, Gwendolen, 248
Redon, Odilon, 202
Rembrandt, 81, 98, 100, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 110, 116, 117, 120, 127, 132, 212, 215, 222, 223, 224, 229, 259, 260, 266
Reni, Guido, 76
Reuwich, Erhard, 22
Reynolds, Sir Joshua, 75, 122, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 132, 133, 146, 174, 175
Reynolds, S. W., 132, 135, 174
Rice, Bernard, 249
Richards, Fred, 235
Richardson, J., 124
Ricketts, Charles, 247, 248
Rigaud, Hyacinthe, 70, 71, 81
Rivière, Henri, 190
Robetta, Cristofano, 43, 44
Robins, W. P., 234
Robinson, Gerald, 140
Rodin, Auguste, 237
Rogers, William, 71
Roghman, Roeland, 110
Romney, G., 122, 126, 129, 130, 132, 133, 174
Rooke, Noel, 249
Rops, Félicien, 201
Rosa, Salvator, 97
Rossetti, D. G., 241, 242, 243
Rothenstein, Wm., 207
Rousseau, 212, 268

Roussel, Raphael, 186
—, Theodore, 185, 187
Rowlandson, Thomas, 75, 113, 114, 156, 157
Royds, Mabel, 189
Rubens, Sir Peter Paul, 30, 66, 67, 68, 79, 89, 100, 101
Ruffe, Léon, 250
Rupert, Prince, 120, 121, 122, 123
Rushbury, H., 232
Ruysdael, 110, 117, 212
Ryland, Wm. Wynne, 144

Saftleven, Herman, 110
Salt, Henry, 160
Sandby, Paul, 153, 154
Sandys, Frederick, 243, 244, 246
Sargent, J. S., 207
Sartorius, J. N., 258
Savage, Wm., 170, 182
Say, Wm., 133, 135
Schall, F. J., 179
Schaufelein, A., 26
Schiavone, N. 97
Schiavonetti, L., 88, 146, 147
Schmidt, Georg Friedrich, 80, 81
Schongauer, Martin, 38, 39, 40, 58, 61, 62
Scotin, G., 74, 80
Schroder, Hubert, 164
Seaby, A. W., 189
Seghers, Hercules, 170
Senefelder, Alois, 191, 192, 193, 194
Sergent-Marceau, A. F., 180
Sharp, William, 75
Shannon, Charles, 193, 203, 204, 205, 247, 248
Sherborn, C. W., 253
Sherwin, J. K., 146
Short, Sir Frank, 122, 137, 139, 140, 163, 225, 226, 233, 268
Sickert, Walter Richard, 234
Siegen, Ludwig von, 120, 121
Silovsky, Vladimir, 239, 252
Siméon, F., 251
Simon, John, 124
Simonet, J. B., 84
Singleton, Henry, 147, 175
Skippe, John, 170
Smith, George, 76
Smith, John, 124, 141
—, John Raphael, 128, 130, 132, 148, 143, 156, 174, 175
—, J. T., 194
—, Percy, 235
Snellaert, 22
Snyders, 125
Solis, Virgil, 30, 58
Solomon, Simeon, 246
Soutman, Pieter, 66
Sparks, Nathaniel, 164, 235
Spence, Robert, 234
Spooner, Charles, 126
Springinklee, H., 35
Squirrell, L. R., 164
Stadler, J. C., 156, 157
Stannard, Joseph, 118
Stark, James, 118
Steen, Jan, 102
Steinlen, T. A., 201, 209
Sterner, Albert, 207
Stothard, Thomas, 87, 194
Strang, William, 163, 224
Strange, Sir Robert, 75, 81
Sullivan, E. J., 207
—, Luke, 74
Sutherland, Graham, 231, 232, 236
—, T., 156
Suyderhoef, 68
Švabinský, Max, 239, 252
Swain, Joseph, 242
Swanenburgh, Jacob van, 102
Swanenburg, Willem, 66
Synge, E. M., 235

Tardieu, Nicolas Henry, 79, 80
Taunay, N. A., 179
Taylor, Baron, 196
—, C. W., 249
—, Horace, 209
Tenniel, Sir J., 243, 246
Teniers, 80
Terborch, 82, 102
Teyler, Johannes, 170, 171, 173
Tiepolo, Giovanni Battista, 110 111
—, Giovanni Domenico, 111
Tintoretto, 168
Titian, 30, 97, 124, 168
Todd, A. R. Middleton, 235
Tomkins, P. W., 146
Tondl, Karel, 252

Toulouse-Lautrec, Henri de, 201, 202, 209
Tunnicliffe, C. F., 235
Turner, Charles, 132, 135
Turner, J. M. W., 89, 90, 115, 116, 125, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 156, 161, 211, 262

Unwin, Francis, 235
Unzelmann, 246

Vaillant, Wallerant, 122
Valck, Gerard, 123
Valloton, F., 202
van, Amstel, Ploos, 152
—, de Velde, Adriaen, 109
—, der Weyden, Roger, 39
—, Dyck, Sir Anthony, 67, 68, 69 77, 100, 101, 103, 127, 144, 217, 225, 233, 262
—, Everdingen, Allart, 110
—, Eyck, Hubert, 38
—, Goyen, Jan, 110
—, Huysum, 125
—, Leyden, Lucas, 24, 27, 46, 50, 51, 52, 54, 96, 108
—, Meckenem, Israhel, 58, 61
—, Oiley, Bernaert, 52, 57
Varley, Cornelius, 194
—, John, 159
Vasari, 41
Velasquez, 218
Vellert, Dirick, 96
Vérard, Anthoine, 28
Verkolje, Jan, 123
Vermeer of Delft, 102
Vernet, Horace, 195
Veronese, Paul, 169
Verpilleux, Émile, 190
Vertue, George, 74
Vibert, P. E., 252
Vidal, G., 83, 179
Vincent, George, 118
Vivarini, 46
Vlaminck, M. de, 238
Vorsterman, Lucas, 66, 67

Wagner, Joseph, 145
Walcot, William, 235
Walker, Fred, 209, 243, 246
—, James, 129
—, Wm., 149
Wallis, R., 90
Walton, J., 159
Ward, James, 131, 174, 175
Ward, Wm., 131, 148, 149, 174
Waterloo, Anthonie, 110, 117
Waterson, David, 140
Wathen, James, 160
Watson, Caroline, 147, 149
—, C. J., 235
—, James, 128
—, Thomas, 129
Watteau, 78, 79, 86
Wechter, G., 58
Wells, Wm. Frederick, 134
West, Benjamin, 76, 194
—, Levon, 236
Westall, W., 156, 159
Wheatley, F., 147, 175
White, George, 123
White, Robert, 73
Whistler, J. A. McN., 92, 202, 203, 215, 219, 220, 221, 222, 223, 227, 229, 231, 235, 243, 260, 268
Wierix, Anton, 65
—, Hieronymus, 65
—, Jan, 65
Wille, Jean, Georges, 80, 81, 82
Willette, A., 209
Wilkie, Sir David, 115, 116, 211
Wilkin, Charles, 147, 149
Williams, W., 155
Wilson, Richard, 76
Wissing, W., 124
Woeiriot, 59
Wohlgemuth, Michael, 24
Woollett, William, 75, 76
Wouwermans, J., 80
Wright of Derby, 127

Zainer, Günther, 22
Zan, B., 58
Zoffany, J., 125
Zorn, Anders, 236, 237, 238, 268
Zundt, Mathias, 59, 96

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